

Inspection of Compass Community School Lincolnshire

Compass Community Ltd., 3 Rayns Way, Syston, Leicester LE7 1PF

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent
school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils settle in well when they join the school. They forge positive relationships quickly with staff and with each other. Pupils know their views matter. They like to share their ideas, for instance about how to improve the school's outdoor area and common room. Pupils know staff care about them and want them to enjoy being at school.

Pupils are happy and feel safe. They respect each other and the adults who work with them. Pupils share their thoughts and feelings with staff. They benefit from weekly therapeutic support. If pupils are unsettled, staff help them to stay calm and manage their emotions. Poor conduct is unusual. Bullying is not an issue.

Staff provide support to help pupils stay engaged during lessons. However, staff do not always modify the curriculum content of each subject carefully enough to meet each pupil's particular needs or abilities.

Pupils love taking part in sports activities, particularly football. Trips, including a recent one to a local Royal Air Force base, develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils explore their future career aspirations. For instance, staff are planning a visit to a local restaurant to help pupils learn what it is like to work as a chef.

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

School leaders, governors and the proprietor share an ambitious vision for the school and its pupils. The school opened to pupils at the start of this academic year. Leaders are still checking that the school's systems and procedures are robust. They are still in the process of making sure that pupils experience a good quality of education in all subjects.

The curriculum is designed well. Leaders personalise curriculum pathways to suit each pupil's individual circumstances. Pupils study a range of different academic and vocational subjects. This allows them to access suitable qualifications. Pupils' programmes also include community visits to the local library, the leisure centre and a nearby museum. These visits support pupils' learning, as well as contributing to their wider experiences.

Curriculum leaders have identified exactly what pupils should learn in each subject and when. However, some staff do not have the specialist subject knowledge they need to deliver these curriculum plans consistently well. They sometimes do not choose suitable ways to teach pupils new information. Learning is not always broken down into manageable chunks. Pupils sometimes struggle to work independently. They need significant support to help them complete written tasks. They cannot always remember what they have learned.

Pupils may have had a patchy experience of education before attending this school. Leaders check what pupils know when they join. These checks are ongoing for current pupils. Staff are not yet fully aware of these pupils' precise needs. They have not identified specific gaps in pupils' knowledge that they need to address. Information on pupils' learning plans is too general. Targets and recommended strategies are not bespoke to each individual. This risks hindering pupils' progress and achievements.

Staff encourage pupils to read every day. Pupils take turns with staff to read aloud. Their reading is mostly accurate and fluent. Pupils confidently share their understanding of the text. They are keen to look up words they do not know, such as 'fickle' and 'obdurate'. Leaders are introducing new reading resources to encourage pupils to read independently more often. While pupils say they do not enjoy reading, they understand why it is important.

Pupils attend school well. They value the 'points' they receive for having a positive attitude and engaging well with their learning. They appreciate how staff adapt when pupils are 'having a bad day'. Staff quickly address any inappropriate conduct. Pupils spend time at the end of each day reflecting on the choices they have made and how they might do better tomorrow.

Pupils have frequent opportunities to learn about personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. The curriculum includes appropriate aspects of relationships education and online safety. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy, physically and mentally. This PSHE programme is supported by individual therapeutic sessions for each pupil. Leaders are planning a wide range of experiences to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils have already supported a charity coffee morning and represented the school at a pupil council meeting involving Compass Community Schools. However, the PSHE programme is not as well suited as it could be to the needs of post-16 students who are preparing for adulthood.

Staff are positive about working at the school. They have settled in quickly and are motivated to do a good job. They value the training they received as part of their induction. However, this training has not been sufficient to ensure that they can carry out their teaching roles as effectively as possible.

The proprietor and those responsible for governance are committed to providing pupils in their care with a high-quality provision. They demonstrate clear capacity to improve the school. However, it is early days. There are clear structures in place for the proprietor and governors to have a close oversight of school leaders' work. However, they have not ensured that school leaders are following the group's well-established systems and procedures as closely as they need to. They have not done enough to ensure that the curriculum for each pupil is of a consistently high quality.

Policies are up to date and reflect the latest statutory guidance. The safeguarding policy and the relationships and sex education and health education policy are available on request. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the

Equality Act 2010. The site is well maintained and provides a suitable environment for learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For instance, they learn about illegal substance misuse and how to stay safe online.

Staff are knowledgeable about the specific risks pupils at this school may encounter. They know how to raise a concern about a pupil and who to talk to if they are worried that the behaviour of an adult may put a pupil at risk of harm.

Leaders make sure that pupils' individual risk assessments are comprehensive. They work closely with other professionals to ensure that pupils get the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The curriculum is not implemented consistently well in all subjects. Some staff do not have sufficient knowledge and skills in the subjects they teach. They do not always make the most effective pedagogical choices when delivering the curriculum. Some pupils struggle to complete planned learning activities independently. Pupils do not secure their subject knowledge as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that staff have opportunities to improve their subject knowledge, expertise and practice. They need to make sure that the curriculum in each subject is implemented consistently so that all pupils achieve well.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is adapted well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. Checks carried out to see what pupils know when they join the school are not comprehensive enough. Information on pupils' learning plans is often general and not related closely enough to each pupil's precise needs. Staff are not clear enough about what each pupil knows and whether they have gaps in their knowledge that need to be plugged. Leaders need to ensure that staff have the information they need about each pupil's specific needs so that they can take these into account when planning and implementing the curriculum.
- The proprietor and those responsible for governance have not ensured that school leaders always follow closely the clear procedures laid down in the school's policies. Some systems for recording pupils' information are not as robust as they should be. The proprietor and those responsible for governance must check that school leaders follow the proprietor's systems and procedures rigorously.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

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

School details

Unique reference number	148827
DfE registration number	925/6060
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10232349
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Proprietor	Compass Community Ltd
Chair	Bernadine Gibson
Headteacher	Joanna Cliffe (Regional executive headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£65,200
Telephone number	07519 380154
Website	None
Email address	joanna.cliffe@compass-schools.org

Information about this school

- Compass Community School Lincolnshire is an independent special school.
- The school was registered by the DfE on 21 October 2021. This was the school's first standard inspection.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for up to eight pupils. The school admitted pupils to its roll for the first time on 6 September 2022.
- Pupils are placed at the school by a number of different local authorities.
- Pupils who attend the school have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some of the pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. They may have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- Pupils who are above the compulsory school age pursue a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs, including preparing them for adulthood.
- The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and three others in the organisation. The head of school oversees the day-to-day running of the school.
- The school is operated by Compass Community Ltd.

- The owner of Compass Community Ltd is the only member of the proprietor body. The school has a governing body that it shares with other schools in the organisation.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the regional executive headteacher and the head of school. They also met with leaders from the proprietor's central team, including the leader of teaching and learning, the special educational needs coordinator and some subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders to examine safeguarding records, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in four subjects: English, mathematics, food technology and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and staff to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also examined curriculum information for a wider range of subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and listened to them read.
- The lead inspector met remotely with the chair of the proprietor board, the director of education and three members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan, a variety of policies, information about pupils' attendance and behaviour, pupils' EHC and individual learning plans and pupils' individual risk assessments.
- Inspectors took into account responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and responses to the staff survey.
- In order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed facilities at the school's site.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Heather Hawkes

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time; and
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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