

# The Beeches School

Aurora Boveridge College, Cranborne, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 5RT

**Inspection date**

14 December 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*

- Leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy reflects the most recent statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Staff implement the policy effectively. The policy is published on the school's website.
- Leaders demonstrate a secure knowledge of their duties to keep pupils safe. Staff receive regular safeguarding training, including a comprehensive induction programme for new staff. This ensures that everyone knows how to identify and report any concerns.
- Leaders deal with safeguarding concerns appropriately. They keep meticulous and detailed records. These show that leaders remain vigilant and act promptly to address concerns about pupils' safety. Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils get the extra help they need.
- The proprietor body ensures that safeguarding is of paramount importance. They meet regularly with school leaders to assure themselves that the school continues to be safe. Leaders have the capacity to deal with the increase in the number of pupils on roll without compromising on welfare and safety.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 14*

- The proprietor takes health and safety seriously. Trained staff, including external specialists, carry out regular health and safety checks. For example, the school's records confirm monthly checks on hot water and emergency lighting. Staff rectify any issues swiftly. Leaders plan to implement the same exacting standards in the refurbished premises.
- Leaders have produced comprehensive fire safety policies and procedures. Staff understand and follow these. Record-keeping shows that staff carry out termly fire drills and weekly fire alarm testing. The proposed new premises complies with fire safety regulations.

- Leaders carefully consider the supervision of pupils in order to maintain a safe environment. For example, staff always escort pupils when moving around the college site. All pupils on the school's roll have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). This means that staffing ratios are high. Leaders' proposals for staff deployment and supervision for the increase in pupil numbers have been thought through well if the material change is granted.

#### *Paragraph 16*

- The school's risk assessment policy is thorough. Staff maintain a set of written risk assessments to ensure that pupils' safety is maximised. These are completed to a high standard. They include, for example, potential risks to pupils on off-site trips, working with tools and when using the outdoor gymnasium.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

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

#### *Paragraphs 17–21(7)(b)*

- The proprietor continues to be vigilant when making checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils, including supply staff. A human resources team supports school leaders in completing the required checks. These include checks on staff working abroad and medical fitness.
- Designated safeguarding leaders have undertaken appropriate safer recruitment training. They ensure that adults in the school are suitable to work with pupils.
- Leaders record statutory information on an electronic single central record. Senior staff, including the proprietor body, monitor this at regular intervals to ensure that it is accurate and complete.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

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

#### *Paragraphs 23–29*

- Leaders have carefully considered the refurbishment of the additional premises. The accommodation is set over two floors. There are six additional classrooms, one cooking room, therapy spaces and an office area. Leaders plan to enhance the current curriculum offered to older pupils on this site. The classrooms are attractively decorated. They are well lit and have suitable acoustics and ventilation. The building will provide enough room to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers.
- The school's second site, The Beeches 2, is located at the entrance to the main school access road. Leaders have installed a walkway from the premises to the main campus. This includes a path through the school's woodland and recreation areas. If needed, for example, in inclement weather, staff can transport pupils to the main campus using the school's minibus. Staff supervision will ensure the safety of pupils when they move between buildings on the campus.

- Both sites have separate toilet facilities available for staff and pupils. The medical room contains a bed, has appropriate washing facilities and is adjacent to a toilet. Drinking water is available throughout the day.
- Both sites provide suitable outdoor spaces for pupils to play and socialise. There are no changing facilities as physical education will continue to take place within the main college campus.
- At the time of this inspection, the school is in the final stages of refurbishing the new site. For example, the kitchen area is unfinished, and the path in the outside area remains a trip hazard. Leaders will ensure that unfinished work is completed and complies with the independent school standards before admitting pupils.
- Once leaders have completed the building work, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 34*

- Leaders have given significant thought to the proposed increase in pupil numbers. If granted, they intend for staffing and pupil numbers to increase gradually over the next 12 months. Leaders will ensure that staff have the right knowledge and skills to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' health, safety and welfare underpins their work. Given that the proposed second building is located away from the current operational site, they have thought about how the day-to-day running of the school will be managed to maintain the quality of education and care for pupils' special educational needs.
- The proprietor body, regional staff and senior leaders maintain strong oversight of the school's work. They have established clear lines of accountability. Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the independent school standards.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards if the material change is approved.

## **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	146790
DfE registration number	838/6042
Inspection number	10262516

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	The Aurora Group
Chair	Kim Welsh
Principal	Lloyd Richards
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000
Telephone number	01725 551247
Website	<a href="http://the-aurora-group.com/thebeeches">the-aurora-group.com/thebeeches</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:adele.henson@the-aurora-group.com">adele.henson@the-aurora-group.com</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	21 to 23 January 2020

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	25	60	60

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	24	60
Number of part-time pupils	2	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	26	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	26	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	26	60

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	13	33

## Information about this school

- The Beeches School is a school set within the grounds of Aurora Boveridge College. The school opened in September 2019.
- A new headteacher joined the school from the college in September 2022.
- The school's first standard inspection took place in January 2020, when it was judged to be good, with all independent school standards met.
- All pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan. Pupils are placed at the school by their representative local authorities.
- The school caters for pupils with diagnoses of autistic spectrum disorder and/or social, emotional and mental health needs. There is on-site professional support through occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, psychologists and clinical psychiatrists.

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has exceeded the maximum number of pupils on roll it is registered to admit. However, as two pupils attend part time, the school does not operate with more than 25 pupils at any one time.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to the proprietor's request to increase the maximum pupil capacity from 25 to 60. This was the first material change inspection to the school's registration.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the principal, headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspector held a remote meeting with the chief executive officer.
- The inspector toured the school site with leaders to check the suitability and safety of the proposed premises to increase pupil numbers.
- The inspector reviewed and evaluated documents provided by the school, including risk assessments, policies, the single central register and safeguarding information.
- The inspector spoke to a group of pupils and staff to discuss how the school keeps them safe.

## Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector



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