

# The Place Independent School

Hill Farm, Belvoir Road, Bottesford NG13 0EA

**Inspection date**

8 February 2023

**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 to 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)*

- Leaders have ensured that pupils' safety and welfare are priorities for all staff.
- There is a culture of vigilance among all staff. They know what to look for to identify possible concerns about pupils' welfare.
- Staff know to refer any concerns to safeguarding leaders. They know to follow up any such referrals, to check that leaders have responded appropriately to their concerns.
- All staff receive regular safeguarding training. Leaders ensure that staff receive the training they need so that they know how to provide pupils with the right support.
- Daily briefings and weekly staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to receive updates on any ongoing welfare concerns. This information helps to ensure that staff know how best to support pupils about whom leaders have safeguarding concerns.
- Each pupil has a trusted adult to support them when they are experiencing difficulties. Leaders have ensured that trusted adults are made available immediately when pupils need their help. This ensures that pupils receive timely, effective support.
- Leaders maintain detailed safeguarding records. These show that leaders' responses to welfare concerns are well considered and prompt.
- Leaders work with a range of agencies external to the school, to share information about concerns and to ensure that pupils get the right support at the right time.
- Leaders work closely with parents and carers, to provide them with support and to check on pupils' welfare. For example, when leaders are not able to make contact with parents to check on absent pupils, they undertake home visits.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. They know that there are adults they can speak to if they have a worry or a concern. They know staff will help them.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online and when at home. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and the meaning of consent.

- Staff know how to raise any concerns they have about the actions of adults towards pupils.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. The policy reflects the latest guidance.

#### *Paragraph 11*

- There is a detailed health and safety policy in place. Leaders undertake regular premises checks, to ensure that the buildings and facilities are safe for pupils.

#### *Paragraph 12*

- Professionals external to the school undertake annual fire risk assessments of each of the school sites. Leaders resolve any concerns these assessments may raise.
- Leaders regularly check the school's fire safety equipment. Regular fire drills ensure that pupils know what to do to keep themselves safe in the event of a fire.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- Leaders have ensured that there are high levels of supervision, so that staff can support pupils who experience anxiety or who demonstrate challenging behaviours.
- Leaders intend to maintain their commitment to high levels of supervision, should the school receive approval for the proposed material change.

#### *Paragraph 16 to 16(b)*

- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Staff follow the guidance in this policy when drawing up risk assessments.
- Leaders maintain a range of risk assessments, including for individual pupils as well as for activities, trips and the school sites. These assessments provide staff with precise information about how to mitigate against any identified risks.
- Leaders regularly review risk assessments to check that they are up to date, reflecting all known, and any new, risks.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards ('standards') in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

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

#### *Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 21(1) to 21(3)(b), 21(5) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c)*

- Leaders understand the checks that they must undertake to reassure themselves of any new member of staff's suitability to work with pupils. These checks are completed before new staff begin working at the school.
- Leaders undertake the necessary checks on any supply staff. Leaders review the conduct and performance of any such staff. They do not use supply staff who they determine to be unsuitable to work with pupils with complex needs.
- Leaders record all recruitment checks on the school's single central record.
- The school is likely 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) to 23(1)(c), 28(1)(a) to 28(2)(d)*

- Leaders have ensured that there are appropriate toilet and shower facilities for the sole use of pupils. The hot water in these facilities does not pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- The number of these facilities across both sites is sufficient to cater for the increase in pupil numbers that the proposed material change would bring about.
- Pupils have access to drinking water from water jugs, available to pupils at all times.

### *Paragraph 24(1) to 24(1)(b)*

- There is an appropriate medical room on each of the two school sites.

### *Paragraphs 25 to 27(b)*

- Both school sites are maintained to an appropriate standard.
- There is sufficient lighting, both internally and externally.
- The acoustics in each room are appropriate.

### *Paragraph 29(1) to 29(1)(b)*

- There is plenty of outdoor space available on each site for pupils to exercise and play.
- These spaces are large enough to accommodate any increase in pupil numbers that the proposed material change would bring about.
- The school is likely 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) to 34(1)(c)*

- Leaders have a secure understanding of the standards that were checked as part of this inspection. They have ensured that the school consistently meets these standards, including those who relate to pupils' health, safety and welfare.
- Leaders have thought carefully about the adaptations they will make to the school site and the provision for pupils' welfare, to accommodate the proposed material change. In so doing, they have focused on ensuring that the school will continue to meet the standards that were checked as part of this inspection.
- All pupils who currently attend the school are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have education, health and care (EHC) plans. Leaders have ensured that the education and care that the pupils receive at the school is appropriate to their additional needs.
- The school is likely 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 | 142939   |
| DfE registration number | 855/6038 |
| Inspection number       | 10275533 |

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                            | Leo Guy  |
| Headteacher                           | Charlotte Hardy  |
| Annual fees (day pupils)              | £94,071 to £125,007  |
| Telephone number                      | 01949 844440   |
| Website                               | <a href="http://www.theplaceindependentschool.co.uk">www.theplaceindependentschool.co.uk</a>             |
| Email address                         | <a href="mailto:charlotte@theplaceindependentschool.co.uk">charlotte@theplaceindependentschool.co.uk</a> |
| Dates of previous standard inspection | 23 to 25 November 2021   |

## Pupils

|                                     | School's current position | School's proposal | Inspector's recommendation |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Age range of pupils                 | 7 to 18                   | 7 to 18           | 7 to 18                    |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 32                        | 50                | 50                         |

## Pupils

|   | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Gender of pupils                                    | Mixed                     | Mixed             |
| Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age | 32                        | 50                |

|  |    |          |
|--|----|----------|
| Number of part-time pupils   | 0  | 0        |
| Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities                              | 32 | Up to 50 |
| Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan                               | 32 | Up to 50 |
| Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan | 32 | Up to 50 |

## Staff

|   | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff | 18                        | 20                |
| Number of part-time teaching staff            | 1                         | 1                 |
| Number of staff in the welfare provision      | Not applicable            | Not applicable    |

## Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with complex needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school is registered to admit up to 40 pupils, aged seven to 18. Currently, there are 32 pupils on roll.
- The school operates across two sites. The lower school is located at Hill Farm, Belvoir Road, Bottesford NG13 0EA. The upper school is located at 7, Jericho Lane, Barkestone NG13 0HF.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is currently applying for a change in proprietor. The application for this change is currently with the Department for Education (DfE) for consideration.
- The current proprietor was not available during the inspection.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2022.

## Information about this inspection

- The DfE commissioned this material change inspection in response to the school's request to increase the number of approved pupil places to 50.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, leaders responsible for safeguarding and the health and safety officer. He spoke with the director of education by telephone.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents provided by the school, including policies related to: risk assessment; safeguarding; health and safety; and fire safety. The inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- The inspector toured both of the school's sites.

## Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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