

# Preston Bridge School

1 Lower Polsham Road, Paignton, Devon TQ3 2AF

**Inspection date**

24 February 2023

**Overall outcome**

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

## Main inspection findings

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

#### *Paragraph 7*

- Leaders follow the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. They have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy reflects statutory guidance and is published on its website.
- Leaders have secured a culture of vigilance. They provide regular safeguarding training, including a thorough induction programme for new staff. This ensures that everyone knows how to identify and report any concerns. Records on the school's electronic system show concerns are evaluated by leaders, including any referrals to external agencies.
- The proprietors meet regularly with school leaders to assure themselves that the school continues to be safe. Leaders are well equipped to deal with the increase in the number of pupils on roll without compromising on safety. They have trained extra safeguarding leaders for the proposed new premises.

#### *Paragraph 11*

- Leaders take health and safety seriously. Staff complete regular health and safety checks. For example, the school's records confirm weekly checks on the temperature of the hot water supply and school vehicles. Staff use a 'ticketing' system to report any concerns. Any issues are addressed swiftly. Leaders plan to implement the same exacting standards in the additional premises.

#### *Paragraph 12*

- Leaders have put in place comprehensive fire safety procedures. Evacuation points are clearly demarcated. Record-keeping shows that staff carry out termly fire drills at different times of the school day. Fire marshals record how well staff and pupils evacuate the building. Any learning points are part of staff training. The proposed new premises complies with fire safety regulations. For example, fire equipment, such as alarms and extinguishers, are checked on a regular basis by competent staff.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- Leaders carefully consider staff supervision to prioritise pupils' safety. For example, staff meet pupils at morning drop-off to ensure that they transition into school safely. Staffing ratios are high. Leaders' proposals for staff deployment and supervision for the increase in pupil numbers have been meticulously planned.

#### *Paragraph 16*

- Leaders maintain comprehensive risk assessments for activities both in and out of school. They include, for example, individual risk factors for pupils and staffing ratios. Staff regularly review risk assessments to ensure that they are relevant to each activity.
- The independent school standards (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

#### *Paragraph 18*

- The proprietor makes checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils. A human resources team supports school leaders in collating the necessary documentation, such as qualifications and references. Safeguarding leaders ensure that adults in school are deemed suitable to work with pupils.

#### *Paragraph 19*

- Leaders do not intend to use supply staff to work at the school. However, they know what checks need to be carried out if this changes in the future.

#### *Paragraph 20*

- Members of the proprietor body, Spaghetti Bridge Limited, have all had the statutory checks to determine their suitability in their roles, including section 128 checks.

#### *Paragraph 21*

- Leaders record statutory information about staff safeguarding checks on an electronic single central record. This includes checks on the proprietor body and contractors. The proprietor body and safeguarding leaders audit the record on a regular basis 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

#### *Paragraph 23*

- Pupils have separate toilet facilities intended for sole use, including in the new premises. Leaders will continue to offer changing accommodation and showers at an off-site leisure facility.

#### *Paragraph 24*

- The school has a designated medical room for the examination and treatment of pupils. It contains a bed and has appropriate washing facilities. It is located close to a toilet.

### *Paragraph 25*

- The proprietor has invested in securing additional premises. The accommodation is set over two floors. There are four additional 'base rooms', a large community room, cooking space, therapy rooms and office areas. Classrooms are finished to the same high standard as the existing site. The building will provide enough room to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers.

### *Paragraph 26*

- Classrooms are spacious and have suitable acoustics and ventilation. Leaders have considered how each base room, including the community room, will provide focused learning experiences.

### *Paragraph 27*

- Leaders have ensured that lighting, both internal and external, is suitable. This school building is well lit throughout. Outside, external lighting helps maintain safe entry and exit to the main school site.

### *Paragraph 28*

- Drinking water is available throughout the day from the community area. This water supply is labelled as suitable for drinking. Hot water in the school does not pose a risk of scalding.

### *Paragraph 29*

- Pupils benefit from a newly introduced outside space. It is suitable for pupils to play and socialise. Physical education will take place off site.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

### *Paragraph 34*

- The proprietor body, regional staff and senior leaders demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards. Those standards considered as part of this material change inspection are likely to be met if approved by the Department for Education.
- Leaders have given significant thought to the proposed increase in pupil numbers. They have created an 'initial transition communications plan' to increase staffing and pupil numbers gradually. Leaders plan to ensure that staff have the right knowledge and skills 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 suitable lines of accountability. For example, the regional operations lead closely monitors the quality of the school's provision and reports to the proprietor body. This enables leaders at all levels to keep a watchful eye on the school's work and provide challenge and support where needed.
- The school is likely to meet the standard in part 8 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 | 148621   |
| DfE registration number | 880/6008 |
| Inspection number       | 10279019 |

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                           | Spaghetti Bridge Ltd   |
| Chair                                | Steven Bradshaw  |
| Headteacher                          | Matthew Hughes   |
| Annual fees (day pupils)             | £54,950  |
| Telephone number                     | 01803926555  |
| Website                              | <a href="http://www.prestonbridgeschool.co.uk">www.prestonbridgeschool.co.uk</a>     |
| Email address                        | <a href="mailto:admin@prestonbridgeschool.co.uk">admin@prestonbridgeschool.co.uk</a> |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 28 to 30 June 2022   |

## Pupils

|                                     | School's current position | School's proposal | Inspector's recommendation |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Age range of pupils                 | 6 to 19                   | 6 to 19           | 6 to 19                    |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 36                        | 75                | 75                         |

## Pupils

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

|  |    |    |
|--|----|----|
| Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age  | 36 | 75 |
| Number of part-time pupils   | 0  | 0  |
| Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities                              | 36 | 75 |
| Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan                               | 36 | 75 |
| Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan | 36 | 75 |

## Staff

|   | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff | 8                         | 14                |
| Number of part-time teaching staff            | 0                         | 0                 |
| Number of staff in the welfare provision      | 10                        | 24                |

## Information about this school

- Preston Bridge School was registered by the Department for Education on 26 July 2021. It is an independent special school in Paignton. The proposed second premises, 'harbourside' occupies the site of a former language school. It is a short drive from the existing premises.
- The school's first standard inspection took place in June 2022, when it was judged to be good, with all independent school standards met.
- The school is a specialist provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have education, health and care plans. Pupils are placed at the school by their representative local authorities.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to the proprietor's request to open additional premises to accommodate the increase in pupil capacity from 45 to 75. This was the first material change to the school's registration.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the regional operations lead, the safeguarding lead and other senior leaders. The inspector held a 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 record and safeguarding information.
- The inspector spoke to a group of pupils to discuss how the school keeps them safe.

## Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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