

Belong School Devon

138 Cowick Street, Exeter EX4 1HS

Inspection date

1 March 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 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2, 3 and 4

- Pupils learn a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes high aspirations. Leaders want all pupils to succeed. The curriculum policy outlines the aims and rationale behind the school's curriculum, which is fully inclusive of the material change request to extend the age range. This policy is supported by relevant schemes of work.
- Leaders have developed curriculum plans and schemes of work in English, including reading, mathematics and scientific subject areas alongside other wider curriculum subjects and qualifications. These plans include learning for younger pupils, so they receive a broad offer taking into account their starting points.
- A sequenced personal, social and health education curriculum is already in place at the school. This incorporates citizenship as well as careers guidance. Leaders have ensured that this curriculum considers the needs for an increase in the age range at the school.
- A clear cycle of monitoring is in place. This ensures that pupils receive relevant teaching across a range of subject areas. Planning is systematically organised so that pupils' diverse needs are taken into consideration, including the resources used.
- Leaders have implemented an assessment framework that checks pupils' progress regularly. Staff use this to inform future learning. Progress trackers across the curriculum enable staff and pupils to see how pupils' knowledge and understanding develop over time.
- The planned curriculum demonstrates how staff support pupils' understanding of how they should behave. Through a trauma-informed and relational approach, leaders and staff support pupil behaviour and attitudes by providing strategies to enable them to understand their own emotions and the feelings of others.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5

- Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the needs of individual pupils in relation to their spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) and emotional development. The school has a social and emotional curriculum to support pupils' mental health and well-being. Leaders carry out baseline checks to enable them to design a curriculum to meet the needs of individual pupils. As a result, leaders provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- The planned curriculum identifies how pupils need to distinguish between right and wrong. Clear links are made to the teaching of fundamental British values. Alongside this, plans demonstrate how pupils are taught to appreciate their own culture as well as that of others.
- Pupils develop their character by learning about opposing opinions and views and how these should be acknowledged and respected.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a) 7(b)

- Leaders have ensured that the safeguarding policy is in line with the most recent statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The policy is published on the school website. Leaders ensure that all staff have regular updates in relation to aspects of safeguarding that may affect their pupils.
- Leaders understand their duty to keep pupils safe. Records are detailed and well kept. Leaders are vigilant and act quickly when concerns arise. They work closely with a range of external agencies to get the support pupils need.
- The proprietary board and senior leaders ensure that safeguarding is a priority. They meet regularly with designated leads to assure themselves that the school continues to be a safe place for pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Leaders have given careful thought to the proposed increase in the pupil age range. They have assured themselves that staff have the relevant knowledge, training and support to deliver a curriculum to younger pupils. Clear curriculum plans are in place as well as systems to monitor the progress pupils make.
- Leaders ensure that pupil well-being and tailored curriculum provision underpin the work of the school. They adapt learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including in relation to the SMSC curriculum.

- The proprietary board and school leaders have a clear oversight of the school's work. Leaders understand the independent school standards. Lines of accountability are in place to check on the impact of both the curriculum and the well-being of pupils at the school.
- The school is likely to continue 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	147471
DfE registration number	878/6082
Inspection number	10277712

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 special school
Proprietor	Belong Learning CiC
Chair	James Evans
Headteacher	Roz Harman
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,000
Telephone number	0300 3035755
Website	www.belonglearning.co.uk
Email address	reception@belonglearning.co.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	13 to 15 July 2021

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	13 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	50	50	50

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	50	50
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	50	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	50	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	50	50

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	13	13
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	3
Number of staff in the welfare provision	21	21

Information about this school

- Belong School Devon is managed by the proprietor, Belong Learning, which is a community interest company. The company operates another independent special school in Gloucestershire.
- The school currently runs from two sites. The main site is located at 138 Cowick Street, St Thomas, Exeter EX4 1HS. The second site is in north Devon at Bishop's Tawton Methodist Church, Old Exeter Road, Bishop's Tawton EX32 0AL. This site is

currently in the process of being closed. The Cowick Street site will remain as the only site.

- The school's first standard inspection took place in July 2021, when it was CMAS School Devon. It was judged to require improvement, with some independent school standards not being met. A progress monitoring visit took place in May 2022, where all standards checked as part of that inspection were then met.
- All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan. Pupils are placed at the school by their local authority. All pupils have social, emotional or mental health needs.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department of Education in response to the proprietor's request to increase the age range of pupils from 13 to 16 to 11 to 16. This was the second material change inspection in relation to the school's registration.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead, lead teachers and the chair of the proprietary board.
- The inspector reviewed and evaluated documents provided by the school, including curriculum plans, policies and safeguarding information.
- The inspector carried out a learning walk across the school and visited classrooms.
- The inspector spoke to a group of pupils about their learning and how the school keeps them safe.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023