

# Our Place School

The Orchard, Bransford, Worcester, Bransford, Worcestershire WR6 5JE

**Inspection date**

4 May 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

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b) [32(1)(c)]*

- The headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). She is supported by a team of deputy DSLs that includes other senior leaders. All are trained to the appropriate level. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the role and has placed safeguarding pupils at the centre of the school. The proprietor and headteacher know that should the material change be granted, the volume of work to ensure pupils are kept safe would increase. They have recognised this and have already increased the capacity of the safeguarding team.
- The headteacher has recently introduced an online reporting system for staff to record any concerns. Staff know that they should record any concerns, no matter how insignificant they may appear to be. Records indicate that staff are using this system well. The DSL or a deputy DSL follow up reports promptly. They review information carefully and take appropriate action, working with local safeguarding partners as needed.
- Leaders provide staff with regular, detailed safeguarding training. This includes a detailed annual update and regular, relevant training that is scheduled throughout the year. These are intended to constantly remind staff of the need to be alert to any signs of potential concern about a pupil. New staff who are appointed mid-year complete safeguarding training as part of their induction. Staff take their responsibility to keep pupils safe seriously. This training is supplemented by routine discussions about all pupils so that staff know about any emerging issues or concerns.
- The written policy to safeguard and protect pupils is published on the school website. It is updated annually and has due regard for the guidance issued by the secretary of state.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

*Paragraph 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- An appropriate health and safety policy and other related policies are in place. Leaders are diligent and vigilant in ensuring that staff and pupils are kept safe. For instance, staff make daily checks of the school grounds to ensure that there are no discarded items that could pose a risk to pupils.
- To support the work of leaders, an external company has carried out an external health and safety visit. This correlates with leaders own assessment of the site and of practice in the school. It confirms that leaders have considered the minutiae around health and safety, from the safe use of the zip wire to the detailed guidance around the storage and administration of medication.
- Leaders have completed a fire risk assessment. They have acted on the small number of issues raised, fully addressing them swiftly. All staff have completed fire marshal training and leaders carry out regular fire drills to ensure the swift evacuation of the building in an emergency. Leaders feed back to staff following a fire drill as part of a review of its efficacy.
- The site is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Systems for fire detection are newly installed and subject to daily, weekly, monthly and annual checks. Leaders provided evidence of these checks being carried out as part of the day-to-day routine of school life. For instance, staff make a daily check to ensure that fire exits are not blocked, locked or obstructed.
- Leaders have clear policies and procedures to ensure that current pupils are well supervised on site. This includes breaktimes, lunchtimes and when pupils are using the outside play equipment. They have considered how they will ensure that pupils are adequately supervised should the material change be granted. They are clear that sufficient trained staff would need to be in place prior to the increase in planned pupil numbers.
- Leaders have removed the detail around risk assessment from the overarching health and safety policy and have written a stand-alone risk assessment policy instead. This is comprehensive. It is supported by a raft of risk assessments that leaders review, update and share with staff. These include risk assessments to help staff meet pupils' individual needs and to minimise the risks to pupils when on site or participating in off-site activities.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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

*Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c)*

- The proprietor and leaders know the requirements for appointing staff to work at the school. They make the required checks and record these accurately on an electronic

single central record. Leaders check and audit this regularly to ensure that it is complete, accurate and up to date.

- Leaders have drawn up a comprehensive recruitment policy. Relevant staff have completed safer recruitment training and demonstrate an understanding of the potential flags that need to be followed up with applicants. Leaders obtain two written references before appointing a new member of staff and routinely seek verbal confirmation of these references. Leaders are determined that new staff should share the values that underpin the school vision and ethos.
- Leaders do not use supply or agency staff, but they are aware of the checks and safeguards that they should undertake if they do.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)*

- The proposed building sits adjacent to the current school and was previously a residential provision for children. It has been decorated to a high standard. All rooms are bright, light and airy and would provide pupils with a great environment to learn in. There is also a large open plan space next to a kitchen that pupils could dine in and socialise with each other and staff. Leaders shared detailed plans of how each room would be furnished, this includes plans for a library area. These are considered and appropriate and reflect leaders' ambitions for pupils.
- As the proposed building was once a residential setting, many of the rooms have an attached bathroom. These can be secured from the inside and are intended for use by one pupil at a time. They are for sole of pupils, with one separate toilet available for staff use. All these rooms have been refurbished as part of the upgrade of the building. All toilets have hot and cold running water with soap and hand-drying facilities.
- Pupils can move easily and securely between the proposed building and the existing school. They have access to a substantial and inviting outdoor space that links the buildings. This has a paved area, a large, grassed area, a pond area, a range of fixed play equipment and an outdoor learning area. It is extremely well maintained and is secure. Leaders have ensured that external lighting is in place so that pupils, staff and visitors can enter and leave the building safely.
- There are suitable shower facilities for pupils in the proposed school building.
- Both the existing school and the proposed building have kitchen areas. The kitchen area in the proposed building has recently been installed and is of a good quality. Pupils have ready access to drinking water in both kitchen areas and this is clearly marked. Leaders have also ensured that pupils have access to drinking water in classrooms during the school day.
- There is a medical room in the existing school building. It contains a washing facility and is near to a toilet. Medication is securely stored in this room. It is used solely as a

space to treat sick and injured pupils and is suitably equipped. Leaders have identified an additional room in the proposed building that will serve a second medical room. This is near a toilet facility.

- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)*

- The proprietor is ambitious for the school and its pupils. They are determined to provide an education that meets the specific needs of each pupil who attends the school. They work closely with the headteacher and other senior staff to further this vision. Pupils' welfare and safety underpin this work. The proprietor and headteacher have bought much needed stability to the school so that it is now ready to grow.
- Leaders have not rushed their plans to increase the number of pupils attending the school. Thus far, each step has been carefully planned, securing the staff expertise and improving the physical environment so that any increase in numbers will be sustainable and done well. Leaders' plans indicate that this will remain the key consideration going forward. They have planned for a gradual increase in pupil numbers over the coming 18 months. This sits alongside a staffing model that sees a planned increase in staffing to meet pupils' needs.
- The headteacher has a detailed knowledge of the independent school standards. She is supported by other knowledgeable staff, who provide effective support around issues such as recruitment and health and safety. This is reflected in the thoroughness of the written policies and associated practice.
- The proprietor and headteacher have established an Education Review Board. This meets to provide support and challenge to senior leaders to ensure clarity of vision and strategy.
- Staff enjoy working at the school. They share a common purpose and buy into leaders' vision.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has a suitable accessibility plan in place that meets the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **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	136260
DfE registration number	885/6039
Inspection number	10286777

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 school
Proprietor	Sean Maguinness
Headteacher	Lauren Tallis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£88,710.01
Telephone number	01886 833378
Website	<a href="http://www.ourplacegroup.com">www.ourplacegroup.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headofeducation@ourplaceschools.com">headofeducation@ourplaceschools.com</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	29 June to 1 July 2021

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 18	8 to 18	8 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	13	45	45

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	12	45

Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	13	45
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	13	45
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	13	45

### Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	13	28
Number of part-time teaching staff	4	10
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

### Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities in the areas of communication and interaction, including autism spectrum disorder, cognition and learning, social emotional and mental health, and sensory impairment. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- Pupils are placed at the school by a small number of local authorities from across the country.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in July 2021, when it was judged to be good.
- The school does not have a religious denomination.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because the proprietor has applied to increase the number of pupils on the school roll to 45. To do this, the proprietor wishes to use additional premises that are adjacent to the current school and form part of the same site.
- This was the school's first material change inspection.
- The inspector visited the existing school and toured the proposed new school building with the proprietor and senior leaders. He held a series of meetings with the proprietor, leaders and staff. The inspector spoke to pupils during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation during the inspection, including the single central record and safeguarding information. He also scrutinised health and safety policies and risk assessments.

## Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector



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