

# Chapel Bridge School

99 Craigie Drive, Plymouth PL1 3JL

**Inspection dates**

24 May 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

#### *Paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(i)*

- Chapel Bridge School is planned to be a special school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and/or autism spectrum disorder. All pupils will have an education, health and care (EHC) plan funded by a local authority.
- A written policy for the proposed curriculum is in place, which gives appropriate consideration to the needs of prospective pupils. The policy describes three phases, which, if implemented, will give pupils a thorough grounding in basic skills, and a wider curriculum which mirrors the national curriculum, while taking pupils' individual needs and aptitudes into account. The policy includes access to careers advice, and a tailored curriculum for post-16 students.
- The policy and plans for pupils' personal, social and health education are clearly geared to the specific needs of the pupils and should, if well delivered, support pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.

#### *Paragraph 3–3(j)*

- Directors and the headteacher intend that prospective pupils will, through effective teaching, acquire the necessary academic and social knowledge to equip them for greater independence and for further education or employment. Schemes of work have been thoughtfully devised to ensure that pupils will build knowledge cumulatively. At key stage 4, pupils will follow their chosen qualification routes. Within these, English and mathematics will, where appropriate, be taught discretely by subject specialists. Schemes of work detail topics and themes to be covered.

#### *Paragraph 4*

- The assessment policy demonstrates that leaders intend to assess pupils before entry to ensure that the school can meet their needs. A baseline assessment is to be carried out just after pupils join the school to ensure that the school has a clear understanding of pupils' needs and, importantly, can judge that pupils are progressing well while at the school and towards the targets contained in their EHC plans.

- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)*

- Leaders have devised a policy to promote and enhance pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Directors and the headteacher aim to ensure that pupils understand the importance of not discriminating against those with protected characteristics, and of respecting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Plans are robust and are complemented by the intended curriculum which will, if effectively enacted, develop pupils' self-esteem and enable them to learn more about themselves and other people, and find their own place in the world of education, work and wider society.
- Leaders are determined that, through a considered and well planned and staged curriculum, teaching will present balanced points of view that are not partisan or biased.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 7*

- Leaders have written a comprehensive safeguarding policy which complies with current government guidance. Procedures for dealing with low-level concerns about individual staff and adults as well as allegations against staff, the headteacher or the directors are appropriate.
- Staff who have already been appointed to the school have undergone a thorough induction which includes safeguarding and child protection procedures. Leaders intend to build a culture across the school which promotes professional curiosity and accountability so that staff are unafraid to challenge others on behalf of pupils.

### *Paragraphs 9, 10*

- A policy is in place which offers guidance to staff in how to manage behaviour effectively. Each pupil will have a relational support plan which details the strategies to help the pupil flourish. Staff have been trained with the aim of ensuring that the use of physical intervention to restrain pupils is rare, safe and reasonable.
- The proposed anti-bullying policy makes clear links to the teaching of personal, social and health education with the aim of ensuring that all pupils are aware of the effects of all types of stereotyping, prejudice, bullying, racism and discrimination and how to challenge them assertively.

### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 13*

- A detailed policy addresses potential health and safety issues and, importantly, details the responsibilities of all members of the school community, including pupils and contractors, in ensuring that the school remains a safe place.
- Considerable efforts have been made to prevent fire and to ensure safety in the event of an outbreak. New extinguishers of different types are already in place and have

been certificated. The fire officer has visited the school and approved leaders' actions to ensure fire safety. There are plans in place for drills six times each year. The fire alarm will be tested weekly.

- An appropriate ratio of staff is trained in first aid procedures. Plans are in place to ensure that all staff have basic training. Leaders have ensured that appropriate first aid equipment is accessible across the site.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- Leaders have carefully considered the ratios and make up of staff to ensure that pupils are well taught and appropriately supervised at different times of the day. The experienced headteacher is aware of the particular challenges faced by pupils with SEMH and/or autism spectrum disorder and will monitor staffing arrangements as the number on roll grows to capacity.

#### *Paragraph 15*

- The proposed school will keep an admission register in electronic form designed to meet legal requirements.
- The school will take an attendance register twice daily, for morning and afternoon sessions. This register will comply with the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance on the use of attendance codes.

#### *Paragraph 16*

- Leaders have compiled a thorough risk assessment policy for the school site. Individual risk assessments show the considerations given to each area or activity and the potential for harm, together with the steps to be taken to mitigate this while enabling pupils to have a rounded and fulfilling education.
- Each pupil will have an individual risk assessment based on their need, which the school will regularly review.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

#### *Paragraphs 18(2)–19(3)*

- Leaders have a good understanding of the steps they must take to ensure that people who apply to work at the school in whatever capacity are fully checked and are suitable to undertake the role for which they are applying.
- Checks have been undertaken to ensure that no member of staff, including the proprietors, is barred from working with children or is prohibited from teaching. All required steps are taken to ensure suitability of appointees before they begin work, including an enhanced criminal record check, and a check on qualifications. The school has little intention of using supply staff, but should this situation change, leaders intend to check the rigour of supply agency checking procedures.

#### *Paragraph 20(1)–20(6)(c)*

- The Department for Education has checked that the executive chair, who is also a director, is a fit and suitable person to hold this position.

*Paragraph 21(1)–21(7)(b)*

- Leaders maintain a meticulous and fully compliant single central record which records that all required checks have been carried out on those staff who are already in post.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraphs 23(1)–23(2), 28(1)(a)–28(2)(b)*

- The building has been extensively refurbished, with special consideration given to the disposition of prospective pupils. The decoration induces a feeling of tranquillity.
- Leaders have worked to good effect to ensure the building is safe. Drinking water is available in the majority of rooms and it is labelled. There are sufficient toilets and washbasins. The school intends to designate separate toilets for boys and girls. The sports hall has separate changing facilities, toilets and showers for boys and girls.

*Paragraphs 24(1)–27(b), 29(1)–31(c)*

- Throughout the building, acoustics, lighting and ventilation are appropriate. There are eight large base rooms which are at least adequate for the total capacity requested. In addition, there are smaller rooms available for therapy and quiet sessions, as well as a large, well-maintained sports hall. The building has a dedicated medical room, with couch, washing facilities and a toilet close at hand.
- The outdoor grounds are extensive, with a fenced field, a playground with newly installed play equipment and a thriving garden. Pupils have their own entrance to the school. The school site is secure.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 32(1)–32(4)(c)*

- The prospective school's website is already in place and leaders are ensuring that the information they intend to share with parents accords with the independent school standards. This website will provide parents with contact details of the school, including the address, telephone number and the name of the headteacher. There is already information about the body of proprietors, which include the address and telephone number for correspondence of its registered office.
- Leaders intend to provide a written report on pupils' progress and attainment to parents three times each year.
- Directors know they must provide the local authority with an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school for children looked after.
- Directors know the information they must provide to the responsible local authority who wholly or partly fund pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan for the purpose of an annual review.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

### *Paragraph 33–33(k)*

- The school has a sensibly graduated complaints procedure. Any issue that leaves a complainant dissatisfied will be dealt with under this procedure. Each complaint will be logged in writing by the headteacher, or by the executive chair if the headteacher is the subject of a complaint.
- Timescales for dealing with complaints are set out and are reasonable. An informal stage is followed by provision for a complaint to be made in writing. Should a complainant remain dissatisfied following the response, a panel of at least three people is to be convened by the directors. One of the panel members will be independent of the running of the school, and none will have had any previous involvement with the complaint or the matters that gave rise to it.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)*

- The proprietorial body and the headteacher are experienced leaders of special provision and have already opened similar schools in the region which have been inspected and found to meet the independent school standards. They have strong knowledge of teaching pupils with SEMH and/or autism spectrum disorder.
- Directors of the group seeking to register the school are rightly drawing on the expertise of its central staff to assist the headteacher as the school prepares to open. All leaders are clearly focused on ensuring that the school will meet the independent school standards, of which they have a clear understanding.
- Accountability structures across all lines of leadership across the group are coherent and strong. Directors and leaders aim for transparency in their dealings with each other, and with pupils and parents. Senior leaders of the group are able to demonstrate their ability to take tough action in their other schools in the interests of pupils.
- Overall, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- An accessibility audit has been undertaken which demonstrates that all parts of the ground floor, for which the school is registering, are accessible. A full accessibility plan, considering all types of disability is on the school's website and demonstrates the thought that leaders have given to ensuring that the curriculum and the building are accessible.

## **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.

## Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149593
DfE registration number	879/6011
Inspection number	10278846

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Spaghetti Bridge Ltd
Chair	Stephen Bradshaw
Headteacher	Matthew Hughes
Annual fees (day pupils)	£54,950
Telephone number	07964 955090
Website	<a href="http://www.chapelbridgeschool.co.uk">www.chapelbridgeschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@chapelbridgeschool.co.uk">admin@chapelbridgeschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	6 to 19	6 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	62	62

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	62
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	62
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	62
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	62



## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	6	29
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	19

## Information about this proposed school

- The proprietorial body, Spaghetti Bridge Ltd, has three directors, an executive chairman, chief executive officer (CEO) and executive director of service quality and development. Spaghetti Bridge already runs four schools in the south west.
- The proposed school is based in a large former preparatory school building in Plymouth. The building has been refurbished to provide a calming and tranquil environment.
- The school intends to cater for pupils between the ages of six and 19 years. All pupils will have social, emotional and mental health needs and/or autism spectrum disorder.
- The proprietor intends to admit pupils in phases. By December 2024, leaders expect numbers to rise to the requested capacity of 62 pupils.
- The proprietorial body has made a significant investment to refurbish the ground floor of the main building. Other outbuildings are located on the site, which will not initially be used by the school. This report considers the refurbished ground floor of the main building, and the sports hall and outdoor area.

## Information about this inspection

- Ofsted conducted this inspection under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. The proposed school is not yet operating.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, the group's regional operations lead, a director as proprietorial representative, the group's curriculum development, safeguarding and research lead, the group systems and governance lead and the business partner for human resources.
- The lead inspector took a tour of the ground floor of the school, the sports hall and the outdoor area.
- The lead inspector scrutinised documents provided by the proprietor prior to the inspection and further documents provided on the day of the inspection. Information included curriculum plans, school policies, and documents related to keeping pupils safe.

## Inspection team

Bradley Simmons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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