

# Compass Community School Eld Park

Canterbury Way, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1EF

**Inspection dates**

25 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)(a)–(b), 2(2), 2(2)(a)–(i), 2A(1), 2A(1)(a)–(g), 2A(2)*

- The proprietor body intends for the proposed school to provide education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils will usually have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The proprietor body has set out to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares pupils well for adult life. There is a strong focus throughout the curriculum to develop pupils' communication, independence, confidence, emotional resilience and self-help skills. Provision is in place for pupils to access therapeutic interventions alongside their education. Leaders have established a 'triangulation of needs' approach. This supports planning for pupils' individual learning pathways.
- Detailed plans and schemes of work are in place for pupils in key stage 1, key stage 2, key stage 3 and key stage 4. The curriculum that leaders have planned matches the ambition and breadth of the national curriculum. The curriculum plans cover the following subjects at each key stage: English; mathematics; science (which covers biology, chemistry and physics for pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4); geography; history; music; personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE); physical education; religious studies; computing; art and design; and design technology. There is also provision for pupils to learn a foreign language.
- There is a validated phonics programme in place with suitable resources to support pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. The school library is well equipped with a range of texts suitable for the age and interests of the pupils who will be joining the proposed school.
- Leaders plan to adapt the curriculum to meet the specific needs of each pupil. Leaders recognise that pupils who will attend the proposed school may have experienced some disruption to their education. Leaders will work with pupils and with parents and carers to identify suitable learning pathways for each individual pupil. Staff will

regularly review each pupil's progress to ensure that the provision that is in place will enable each pupil to be successful.

- Pupils will have access to a broad range of qualifications to support their next steps in education and/or training. There is a comprehensive programme of careers education already in place. This includes independent careers advice.
- The planned curriculum for relationships education for primary pupils and for sex and relationships education for secondary pupils follows statutory guidance. There is a clear policy and programme in place for teaching PSHE and citizenship.

*Paragraphs 3, 3(a)–(j), 4*

- Staff at the proposed school will have access to thorough curriculum documentation. This will provide them with the information they need to plan and teach sequences of lessons across the full range of subjects that pupils study. Learning resources are in place to teach the planned curriculum. Subject leaders work across the proprietor's schools and will provide guidance and support to staff to implement the curriculum plans effectively.
- There is a comprehensive schedule of assessment, monitoring and review. Staff will regularly assess and review pupils' progress and their achievement over time. Leaders, including governors, will assure themselves of the quality of education through regular monitoring and review. Leaders will also ensure that staff receive appropriate training to carry out their roles.
- The independent school standards relating to the quality of education are likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

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

*Paragraph 5, 5(a)–(d)*

- Leaders have carefully considered the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at the proposed school. The school's curriculum, ethos and culture are focused on developing pupils' self-knowledge, self-awareness and their self-esteem. There is a strong focus throughout the curriculum on pupils developing positive, respectful relationships and learning to keep themselves and others safe, including when they are using the internet.
- The proprietor has taken appropriate steps to ensure that pupils are not subjected to extremist or partisan views. Visiting speakers must adhere to the school's policy and guidance. Trips and visits are planned to complement the school's curriculum and develop pupils' wider interests and experiences. This includes developing pupils' understanding of different cultures and beliefs.
- Leaders have identified opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of democracy and to develop tolerance and mutual respect beyond their learning as part of the PSHE curriculum. Leaders plan to help pupils learn more about the role of national institutions and the rule of law through creating links with local police and health providers.
- The independent school standard relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

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

*Paragraph 7, 7(a)–(b), 9, 9(a)–(c), 10*

- The proprietor has ensured that the child protection policy reflects the most recent statutory guidance and is published on the proposed school’s website. There are systems in place for recording and reporting safeguarding concerns. There is a detailed schedule of training and staff supervision to support a positive safeguarding culture. This includes training for designate safeguarding leaders.
- The proposed school’s approach to supporting pupils to develop positive attitudes and to promote pupils’ positive behaviour is clearly set out in the school’s ‘behaviour and attendance for learning’ and the ‘countering bullying’ policies. These policies are also published on the school’s website.

*Paragraph 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a)–(b)*

- The proprietor has clearly set out in detailed health and safety policies the relevant procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff and of visitors to the proposed school site. There is a comprehensive programme of premises maintenance checks, including fire safety, gas and electrical maintenance checks. There are also systems for checking that maintenance checks are carried out as planned.
- Suitable admissions and attendance registers are in place. They are ready for when pupils are admitted to the proposed school. Leaders carefully consider the supervision of pupils at all times of the school day. Leaders have established effective procedures for ensuring the appropriate deployment of school staff. This includes how pupils are welcomed into school at the start of the day and how they are supported throughout the school day.
- The proprietor has set out a rigorous approach to assessing risk. There are clear lines of accountability and oversight to ensure that potential risks are reduced as far as possible and managed appropriately.
- The independent school standards for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a)–(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a)–(d), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a)–(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a)–(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5), 21(5)(a)–(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a)–(b)*

- The proprietor body, leaders and governors ensure that all required checks are carried out before a member of staff is employed to work at the school. This includes supply staff, members of the proprietor body and members of the governing body. The single central record provides a systematic and thorough record of all pre-employment checks. The policy states clearly the actions that staff should take if they have concerns about the conduct of a member of staff.
- The proprietor body ensures that rigorous recruitment processes are in place. Staff interviews are carried out by leaders who have received safer recruitment training. Staff will receive detailed induction training and guidance so that they are well prepared for working at the proposed school. This includes safeguarding training and specialist training appropriate for the needs of pupils, in the context of the school.

- The designated leaders for safeguarding are experienced and knowledgeable. They understand the importance of regular training to ensure that all members of staff have the knowledge and depth of understanding they need to be vigilant and alert to potential safeguarding concerns. Systems to record and report safeguarding concerns are already set up ready for when pupils join the school.
- The independent school standards for the suitability of staff and proprietors are likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

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

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a)–(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a)–(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a)–(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a–d), 28(2), 28(2)(a–b), 29(1), 29(1)(a–b), 31(a)–(c)*

- The proposed school building has been fully refurbished to a high standard and successfully adapted for use as a school. Classrooms and circulation spaces are well ventilated and well lit. The environment is calm and quiet throughout.
- Classrooms are all located on the ground floor. There is suitable office accommodation and a staff room. The proposed building is organised in three 'wings'. Primary-aged pupils will be located in a wing that contains two suitably sized classrooms and an intervention room. The primary playground is situated next to the primary wing. This space is easily accessible and suitably equipped to support primary pupils in their play. Fencing provides security and privacy for pupils from the street and separates the playground from the rest of the school site.
- The second wing contains four classrooms and a dedicated science room. Five further classrooms are located in the third wing. All these classrooms are of an appropriate size and are suitably furnished to accommodate pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4. The science room is equipped with a lockable cupboard to keep the resources that will be used for teaching science, including chemicals, secure.
- On the first floor there is a therapy room, a meeting room and the school library. The first floor is accessed via a staircase. Pupils will not be able to gain access to this area unless they are accompanied by an adult.
- There is a dedicated outdoor sports area for pupils. This area is separated from the neighbouring houses and gardens by fencing to provide privacy and security. There is also a garden area which provides adequate space for pupils to socialise outside.
- There is a communal dining room for staff and pupils. There is also a kitchen which will be used for teaching food technology. The kitchen is well equipped with sinks, refrigerators, hobs, ovens and a food storage area. The proprietor has put in place relevant systems and procedures to maintain the highest standards of hygiene and of safety. Appropriate fire safety measures are also in place.
- The proprietor has ensured there are suitable toilet and washing facilities, including showers. There are separate toilet facilities for adults, including visitors to the school site. Drinking water supplies are clearly marked.
- The medical room, which includes a bed and washing facilities (including a shower), is located close to toilet facilities.
- The independent school standards for the premises and accommodation are likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

## Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 32(1)(a)–(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a)–(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a)–(g), 32(4), 32(4)(a)–(c)*

- The proprietor body has ensured that the required information has been published on the proposed school's website.
- There are established procedures in place for providing local authorities with the information they need regarding the income received from each local authority and its expenditure.
- The independent standard relating to the provision of information is likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraph 33, 33(a)–(k)*

- The proprietor body has written a suitable complaints policy. This is published on the proposed school's website. This policy clearly sets out the procedure that the proprietor body and school leaders will follow when a complaint is made. Systems are in place to maintain appropriate records of complaints that are made and how leaders have responded.
- The independent standard relating to the manner in which complaints are handled is likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

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

*Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a)–(c)*

- The proprietor body, governors and leaders demonstrate a detailed and secure understanding of the independent school standards. Regular monitoring and review of the implementation of the school standards in the proposed school setting will assure leaders that the proposed school consistently meets the independent school standards.
- The proprietor body has appointed a suitably experienced headteacher. The headteacher will be supported by the executive headteacher and directors of education.
- The independent standard relating to the quality of leadership in and management of schools is likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor body has ensured that a suitable accessibility plan and equality statement are in place. The proprietor, governors and school leaders demonstrate their commitment to inclusion, equality and diversity through the proposed school's stated vision and ethos. This is also reflected through the proposed school's curriculum and policy documentation.
- All requirements are likely to be met when the proposed school opens.

## **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	149866
DfE registration number	926/6034
Inspection number	10290527

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	Compass Community Limited
Chair	Bernie Gibson
Headteacher	Joanna Cliffe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£71,500
Telephone number	01482 777594
Website	<a href="http://www.compass-schools.org">www.compass-schools.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:rebecca.slayford@compasscommunity.co.uk">rebecca.slayford@compasscommunity.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Does not apply	5–17	7–17
Number of pupils on the school roll	0	36	36

### *Reason for inspector's recommendations*

- In their application for registration submitted to the Department for Education, the proprietor body proposed the age range of pupils to be from five years to 17 years. At the time of the pre-registration inspection, the proprietor and school leaders had reviewed their proposal and requested that the age range be specified from seven years. This would bring Compass Community School Eld Park into line with other Compass Community schools.
- The inspector discussed this with the proprietor and school leaders. The inspector's recommendation reflects their evaluation based on inspection evidence. The proposed school, including the premises and curriculum, is suitable for pupils from the age seven years.

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Does not apply	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	36
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	36
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	Not yet known
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	Not yet known



## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

## Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor body is Compass Community Ltd, which provides a range of services for children nationally, including other registered schools.
- The proprietor is seeking registration with the Department for Education (DfE) as an independent special school to admit 36 pupils between the ages of seven and 17 years.
- The proposed school is based in Thetford, Norfolk.
- The proposed school will provide education for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs, and/or complex trauma and attachment difficulties.
- Pupils will usually have an EHC plan. Pupils will usually be funded by the local authority.
- The proposed school will have a governing body. The chair of the governing body is independent of the proprietor body. The governing body will oversee the work of the school on behalf of the proprietor.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first pre-registration inspection of the proposed new school. The inspection took place at the premises of the proposed new school.
- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE.
- The inspector met with the assistant director of education and the regional executive headteacher.
- The inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body, which is Compass Community Ltd, and the director of education. The inspector met separately with the vice chair of the governing body. These meetings took place virtually.
- The inspector visited all parts of the proposed school premises, including outdoor areas.
- The inspector scrutinised documentation, including policies and procedures, certificates of compliance, risk assessments and curriculum plans. The inspector also reviewed the information that the proprietor has published on the school's website.
- The inspector examined the single central record of pre-employment checks and reviewed the procedures for the recruitment of staff.

## Inspection team

Katherine Douglas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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