

Compass Community School Willow Park

Willow Street, Sowerby Bridge, Halifax HX6 2BU

Inspection date

2 May 2023

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 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 older pupils, so they receive a broad offer taking into account their starting points.
- A sequenced and appropriately ambitious personal, social and health education curriculum is in place at the school. This incorporates citizenship as well as careers guidance. Leaders have ensured that this curriculum considers the needs of 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.
- The independent school standards (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 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)

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a safeguarding policy in place and available on the school's website. The policy is detailed and complies with current government guidance in relation to 'Keeping children safe in education (2022)'.
- The proprietor ensures that all staff are trained in child protection and the wider aspects of safeguarding, including those highly pertinent to the local context. Staff are confident in raising any concerns they have about a child. Pupils trust staff to help them with any problems or worries they have.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is the headteacher. The deputy DSL is the executive headteacher. A further four members of staff are trained in this role. Both the DSL and the deputy DSL have completed enhanced training in child protection. They are knowledgeable and work in tandem with local agencies to ensure pupils get help outside of school when this is needed. Leaders keep accurate and detailed records of all safeguarding concerns and referrals. They are proactive in contacting local authority partners if any pupil at the school needs additional support and/or protection.
- The proprietor's oversight of safety and well-being in school is strong. There are secure safeguarding systems in place. The proprietor has established a school scrutiny panel to govern the school. This meets each term and monitors the progress and outcomes of all safeguarding referrals. Members review the school's safeguarding arrangements at each meeting.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) approves the implementation of the material change.

Paragraphs 11, 12

- There is a well-considered health and safety policy in place. Staff are trained in health and safety and know what they are expected to do with regard to their role in school. The headteacher ensures that staff implement health and safety procedures correctly. Health and safety records show that staff complete relevant site checks daily, weekly, monthly and annually, as directed by policy.
- The proprietor is aware of the importance of having secure fire risk assessments in place. There is a robust, up-to-date fire risk assessment in place which covers the

current school site. This assessment is reviewed annually.

- The headteacher ensures that checks of fire safety equipment and emergency evacuation drills are completed regularly and consistently. All staff complete training in fire safety. Seven members of staff have received enhanced fire warden training.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

Paragraph 14.

- Pupils are supervised effectively, and behaviour around the school is calm and appropriate. Pupils become increasingly confident in the small class sizes and appreciate the close support that they receive from staff. The proprietor is aware of the additional support pupils in the school need, as such the ratio of staff to pupils is high. They are committed to maintaining the current high staffing levels.
- The proprietor has ensured that this standard is likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- There is a detailed risk assessment policy in place. The proprietor ensures that staff know how to identify, assess and reduce risks around the school and when taking pupils off site. Risk assessments are completed consistently by staff and monitored by the headteacher. Risk assessments are well considered and cover many eventualities.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraphs 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), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

- The proprietor knows how to recruit staff safely. The proprietor ensures that administrators check application forms thoroughly and in line with their robust safer recruitment procedures. Safeguarding responsibilities are well executed throughout any recruitment process. References are collected diligently and processed by the central compliance team.
- The headteacher makes sure that all required pre-employment checks are completed on adults before they start working at the school. They ensure that safer recruitment checks are completed on all members of the school board before they start to work with the school.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

Paragraphs 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), 21(6)

- Information from pre-employment checks is stored on a central record. The central

record has sections covering all adults who work at the school, including any contractors and members of the governing board. The headteacher ensures there are no gaps in the information on the central record and that entries are kept up to date. The compliance team checks the central record for completeness and accuracy as part of the school's regular safeguarding audits.

- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 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 proprietor has requested an increase in the number of pupils able to be admitted to the school from 24 to 27.
- The school site is well maintained, having multiple, appropriate toilet and shower facilities suitable for the age of the pupils in the school. The temperature of water at handbasins and sinks is maintained at a safe level. There is adequate access to drinking-water around the school site, which is clearly labelled, for easy access to refreshments.
- There is a well-resourced medical room in the school. This has a bed and handbasin and is close to toilet facilities. This room is available for the sole purpose of the care of pupils if at any time they are feeling unwell or require treatment.
- The school is most welcoming and maintained to an extremely high standard. There are many well-appointed classrooms and well-designed workspaces. These are light and airy. Acoustic levels are comfortable.
- The entrance area to the school building is designed to ensure security and pupil safety. There is adequate external lighting.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- There is an up-to-date child protection policy which complies with current statutory requirements. The policy is published on the school's website and easily accessible to parents and carers. A printed copy of the policy is available upon request.
- The proprietor has ensured that this standard is likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor and other leaders have a clear vision for the school showing great commitment to their local community. The rationale behind the material change request is based on leaders' wish to support specific students until the end of key stage 5.

- The proprietor and other leaders are experienced school leaders. Willow Park School is both well organised and well ordered; it is a peaceful and nurturing place in which to learn. Leaders know exactly what they want from the proposed, expanded school and have clear plans in place to support the school as it grows and develops.
- The proprietor has a well-established board which provides the function of school governance. The members of this board have the knowledge and skills to provide support and challenge to the headteacher. The board meets termly to scrutinise information provided by leaders.
- The proprietor, through the compliance team, has developed robust systems to record all training completed by staff. Training records are regularly checked to ensure mandatory refresher training is completed as required. Staff complete safeguarding training as part of their induction, and then on a regular basis. The DSL runs additional, regular safeguarding training sessions for staff.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material change.

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	148059
DfE registration number	381/6025
Inspection number	10284480

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 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	Compass Community Ltd
Chair	Kate East
Headteacher	Christopher Hughes
Annual fees (day pupils)	£71,500
Telephone number	01422 557273
Website	www.compass-schools.org/willow-park/
Email address	rebecca.slayford@compass-schools.org
Date of previous standard inspection	1 to 3 November 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 17	6 to 18	6 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	25	27	27

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	25	27
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	25	27
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	25	27
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	25	27

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	24	24
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1

Information about this school

- The school is situated in the town of Sowerby Bridge.
- The school was registered in January 2021
- The school has been set up to meet the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and other associated special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Most of the pupils who attend the school are from Bradford and Calderdale local authorities.
- The school does not use alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE in response to the proprietor's request for a material change. The material change requested is to increase the number of pupils who could be admitted to the school from 24 to 27 and to request a change to the age range of pupils in the school from six to 17, to six to 18.
- This is the school's first material change inspection.
- Leaders were given four days' notice of the inspection. The inspection lasted one day and was conducted by one inspector.
- The inspector met with the headteacher/DSL and the executive headteacher, who is the representative of the proprietor.
- The inspector undertook a tour of the school and visited the classrooms, social areas and other facilities. The inspector checked school buildings and grounds against the standards.
- The inspector scrutinised school documents and the arrangements to safeguard pupils. This included checking the school's safeguarding systems and the single central record and meeting with the DSL.

Inspection team

Marcus Newby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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