

# Inspection of Chilton Bridge School

Chilton Cantelo, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8BG

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Inspection dates: 7 to 9 June 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming and inclusive school. They feel safe. Many say they feel respected by adults and peers. Most parents praise the school and what it achieves for their children. One parent commented that their child is now engaged, forming friendships and happy. They are 'a different child'.

Many pupils arrive at Chilton Bridge having had negative experiences of school. Leaders aim to rebuild trust and confidence in education. They are passionate about their core offer and approach through wanting to improve pupils' experiences, knowing all can achieve. Pupils appreciate this. One pupil stated that the school has enabled his confidence to 'go through the roof!'

Leaders have created a calm and purposeful environment for pupils to learn. They have high expectations for how pupils should behave. There has been a significant improvement in behaviour over time. Staff work as a team to ensure they meet the needs of individuals. They respond sensitively and calmly when pupils struggle with their emotions.

Staff provide high-quality pastoral support. They teach pupils how to stay healthy, keep active and have a good understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils talk openly about differences and why they should be celebrated.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and staff have high aspirations of what they want all pupils to achieve. Recent changes in leadership have not affected pupils being at the heart of all that the school does. Staff appreciate the calm and determined leadership of the acting headteacher. Leaders know the needs of pupils well. As a result, they ensure the curriculum supports pupils in developing a love of learning.

Leaders understand the importance of pupils being confident and proficient readers. They ensure that they know where pupils are in their reading journey. Staff tailor the curriculum to take aspects of reading into account. They are trained to support those who require further support. Staff skilfully incorporate phonics into project-based learning. However, pupils do not talk about reading for enjoyment. They see reading as just a part of their learning. They do not yet select their own books to read for pleasure.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that enables pupils to overcome previous barriers to learning. It is based on pupils' interests and on a foundation of trusting relationships with staff. Staff develop areas of the curriculum with flexibility and adjust content according to pupils' needs. Most pupils engage well in their learning. Many talk confidently about what they are learning and why. However, not all staff have the subject knowledge or confidence to support the deepening of pupils' knowledge in some subjects. As a result, not all pupils gain the level of understanding they are capable of across the curriculum.

Staff ensure that personal, social and health education (PSHE) plays a key part in pupils' provision. Leaders focus on ensuring that gaps in pupils' knowledge in their understanding in relationships education are filled. Pupils talk openly about their aspirations. Leaders have begun to think about how the curriculum approach supports pupils' cultural capital and how pupils can become members of the wider community. Staff enable pupils to take part in a range of opportunities to understand the environment beyond their locality. For example, pupils celebrate national events such as International Women's Day and explore aspects of fair trade.

Staff promote a positive and respectful school culture. They monitor pupils' behaviour and attendance well. Staff use a relational and positive approach when dealing with individual behaviour needs. Pupils socialise together well during breaktimes. Staff engage in reflective conversations with pupils, resulting in improvements in behaviour.

Governance leads and the proprietary board understand their responsibilities and provide regular challenge for leaders. They closely monitor the work of the school to ensure effective quality assurance processes are in place. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the independent school standards. Leaders understand the main pressures on staff, including those new to the school. Staff are proud to work at the school. They all share the same vision and determination for all.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, and those responsible for governance, ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. There is a strong culture of vigilance in the school. Staff receive up-to-date training and regular briefings in relation to safeguarding. Staff know how to record and report concerns about a child. They know that their concerns will be taken seriously.

Leaders make sure that the planned curriculum supports pupils' understanding of risk. Staff are aware of pupils' individual vulnerabilities and the challenges within the local community. Relevant checks are carried out on staff to ensure they are safe to work with children.

Relevant safeguarding policies are available on the school's website for parents.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Some pupils do not enjoy reading or want to read. As a result, many do not actively or independently select books to read for pleasure. Leaders need to ensure that their plans to develop this area of the curriculum enable a positive culture of reading for pleasure among all pupils.
- Staff do not always have the subject-specialist knowledge to enable them to enrich pupils' understanding of the areas of learning being taught. As a result, pupils' learning is not always deepened as effectively as it could be. Leaders need to ensure that they enable staff to access relevant specialist subject knowledge to support them in challenging pupils' thinking further.

### How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	149220
<b>DfE registration number</b>	933/6027
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10267736
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent special school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	6 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	26
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Spaghetti Bridge Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Bradshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Waldron
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£54,950
<b>Telephone number</b>	01935 316900
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://chiltonbridgeschool.co.uk">https://chiltonbridgeschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@chiltonbridgeschool.co.uk">admin@chiltonbridgeschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Chilton Bridge School was registered by the Department of Education on 30 August 2022. This was the school's first standard inspection.
- The proprietor, Spaghetti Bridge Ltd, runs three other schools. The current acting headteacher took up post in May 2023.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and/or mental health needs. Some pupils also have a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or autism spectrum disorder.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Most placements are funded by Somerset, Dorset or Wiltshire local authorities.
- Some pupils are currently transitioning into the school from two registered alternative providers and three unregistered providers.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and other senior leaders, including curriculum coordinators. They met with leaders of governance, including the chair of the proprietary board, the regional lead, the relational lead and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PSHE and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the school's procedures for keeping children safe. This included checks on safeguarding records, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors conducted a range of activities to confirm whether the independent school standards were met in full. Inspectors considered the site and premises, looked at the information that the school provides for parents, including the complaints policy, and looked at records to consider how well leaders ensure that pupils' health and safety is protected.

- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents, including five free-text comments and an email correspondence. Inspectors also held discussions with parents about the school’s provision for their children. In addition, inspectors took into account the 15 responses to the staff survey and the 12 responses to the pupil survey.

### **The school’s proposed change to its premises and the maximum number of pupils**

- The school has applied to the Department of Education (DfE) to make a ‘material change’ to its registration. At the DfE’s request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.
- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.**
- The proprietor requested to increase the maximum number of pupils from 41 to 97. They have additional premises on site that have adequate space and facilities for the increase in pupil numbers.
- These premises have been refurbished and are well maintained and designed. They have sufficient resources for teaching the school’s intended curriculum. Leaders have ensured that relevant school policies apply to the additional space, which is currently nearing completion.

### **Information about the material change inspection**

- This material change inspection was commissioned by the DfE at the proprietor’s request. The proprietor wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils by 56. In doing so, the school will expand numbers across their spacious refurbished premises and have adequate space for the increase in pupil numbers.
- Inspectors considered the suitability of the developing premises and the policies being implemented.
- There is no change to the nature of special educational needs that the school caters for.
- This is the first material change inspection in respect of this particular change that the school has applied to make.
- The lead inspector reviewed policies and procedures. They had a tour of the refurbished premises and took into account the policies and procedures being implemented to check compliance with the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lydia Pride

His Majesty's Inspector



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