

# Releasing Potential School

7 Kingscroft Court, Ridgway, Havant PO9 1LS

**Inspection date**

5 June 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraph 7–7(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c)*

- The previous inspection in October 2022 found that the arrangements to safeguard pupils were not effective. Leaders and trustees had not identified significant and longstanding failures in the school's safeguarding policy and practice. Safeguarding training for key members of staff was not up to date. Safeguarding information was not kept confidential.
- At this inspection, the inspector found that the school's arrangements for safeguarding were much improved.
- In the school's action plan, which was evaluated in February 2023, leaders indicated that the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the team of deputy DSLs had completed the appropriate training. The plan also indicated that members of the trust board had completed suitable safeguarding training. During the inspection, evidence confirmed that the required training had been undertaken.
- Leaders provide suitable safeguarding training for staff supplemented by regular staff briefings about pupils' welfare and safety. This means that staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters and clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Leaders monitor pupils' safety and welfare closely. They follow up on concerns appropriately and keep suitable records of any actions taken. Leaders have taken the necessary steps to minimise access to confidential safeguarding information. The DSLs consult regularly with local authorities and work constructively with other agencies.
- Leaders have continued to ensure that all staff recruitment checks are completed. The single central record is well maintained and up to date. Key staff have attended safer recruitment training.
- The relevant requirements that were checked in this part are met.

## Part 6. Provision of information

### *Paragraph 32(1)–32(1)(c)*

- At the time of the last inspection, the school's website did not have all the required safeguarding information on it. A suitable safeguarding policy, updated to reflect recent guidance, is now published on the school's website.
- This standard is now met.

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

### *Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)*

- The last standard inspection identified that those responsible for governance lacked the knowledge required to hold leaders to account effectively. This was particularly the case for safeguarding.
- Leaders and trustees have responded to the findings of the previous inspection carefully but with urgency. The steps outlined in the school's post-inspection action plan have been implemented in full.
- The school has strengthened its model of governance by appointing three new members to the board of trustees. They bring suitable knowledge, expertise and ambition for the continuing improvement of the school. New sub-committees with specific responsibilities for behaviour and safety (including safeguarding), finance and resources, education, and people and human resources have been put in place. Terms of reference for these committees have been drawn up.
- Members of the trust board have a wide range of skills and are able to hold leaders and each other to account. One of the newly appointed trustees provides oversight of safeguarding. A cycle of monitoring all aspects of the safeguarding policy and practice has strengthened trustees' ability to review and evaluate the school's safeguarding culture. In addition, leaders are proactive and seek external validation or advice relating to a wide range of safeguarding matters.
- Previously unmet standards relating to part 8 of the independent school standards are now met.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

### **The school now meets the following independent school standards**

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

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

#### **Part 6. Provision of information**

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request.

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

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

## School details

Unique reference number	144808
DfE registration number	850/6093
Inspection number	10284447

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

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	7
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Releasing Potential
Chair	Paul Suter
Headteacher	Janet Cornall (interim)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,630
Telephone number	02392479762
Website	<a href="http://www.releasingpotential.com/school">www.releasingpotential.com/school</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:mikeking@releasingpotential.com">mikeking@releasingpotential.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	18 to 20 October 2022

## Information about this school

- Releasing Potential School forms part of the Releasing Potential charity.
- The school makes use of local leisure and wildlife facilities to educate pupils off site. In addition, the school owns and operates several other premises, including six acres of farmland, a sailing centre and an outboard motor workshop. The school is currently installing a climbing wall as part of ongoing renovations to the Havant site.
- The school offers provision for pupils aged between 11 and 18 years. Pupils are placed in the school by either Hampshire or West Sussex local authority because they have

additional social, emotional and mental health needs. Most pupils have been excluded from mainstream settings or pupil referral units. All have an education, health and care plan.

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of trustees and a further three trustees have been appointed. In January 2023, a new special educational needs coordinator was appointed. They took up the post of interim headteacher in May 2023.
- The school is currently using one registered and one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school is located on two sites, one in Havant and the other in Chichester:
  - Unit 7, Kingscroft Court, Ridgway, Havant PO9 1LS
  - 4 St James' Works, St Pancras, Chichester PO19 7NN

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in October 2022. The inspection was carried out with no notice.
- Following the previous inspection, the Department for Education (DfE) required the school to prepare a statutory action plan. Ofsted evaluated the action plan on 13 February 2023. The DfE wrote to the school accepting the plan on 27 March 2023.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer and with a trustee who was representing the proprietorial body. She met with the interim headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. The inspector toured both school sites and reviewed the school's website. She checked the single central record and considered a range of documentation associated with the independent school standards checked during the inspection. The inspector spoke informally with pupils during the school day. She also met with a group of staff.

## Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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