

Brenkley School

3–5 Brenkley Way, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6DS

Inspection date

5 July 2023

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- All staff are trained as designated safeguarding leads. This ensures that safeguarding procedures and processes are well understood. Records show that timely actions are in place to safeguard pupils when concerns arise.
- The safeguarding policy is thorough. Each pupil has their own plan which takes account of potential risks and safeguarding vulnerabilities. This ensures that staff are aware of how best to support each pupil.

Paragraph 11

- The health and safety policy is appropriate to the setting of the school. Leaders undertake regular checks to ensure the environment is safe for pupils.
- Leaders continue to be awarded the Contractors Health and Safety Assessment (CHAS) accreditation. This allows for a more thorough understanding of issues relating to health and safety and the environment in which pupils work.

Paragraph 12

- Regular fire risk assessments are completed. Leaders ensure that equipment related to fire safety is appropriate and renewed as necessary.
- The school has recently acquired a second premises very close to the current building. This building is currently being refurbished ready to accept pupils. Leaders have purchased appropriate fire equipment for this building. Actions are underway to ensure the new building meets regulations around fire safety. For example, there are plans to meet risks identified in an initial fire assessment prior to the full fire risk assessment due to take place later in July.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are well supervised. Leaders have prepared for the growth of the school and have already employed more staff to ensure that, should the Department for Education (DfE) accept the material change, they can maintain at least the minimum

requirement of staff to pupil ratios. In practice, the school goes beyond the minimum requirements for these ratios.

Paragraph 16

- The risk assessment policy is clear. It sets out risks for pupils in school and also covers enrichment activities which take place for pupils. Leaders undertake to build independence in pupils and so ensure that the policy allows for positive risk taking in a safe, well supervised environment to meet this goal.
- Leaders are acutely aware of the need to minimise risk to pupils. As a result, they have a large number of risk assessments through which they seek to minimise risk to pupils. For example, pupils undertake archery lessons on the school site. Leaders have identified risks and have actions in place to mitigate them.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is implemented.

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

Paragraphs 17 to 21

- Checks on staff are thorough. A new system for keeping records of these checks has recently been implemented. It allows leaders to show that appropriate checks are recorded on the single central record. These checks take place before employment commences.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23, 23

- The new building also has several toilet facilities, including accessible toilets. These are separate for girls and boys. Work remains to be completed on the supply of water, including hot water, to the new building. When the inspector visited, this work was well underway and records of planned work were available to scrutinise. The current school site continues to have ample and appropriate toilet and washing facilities that could accommodate all pupils should the material change be implemented.
- When complete, the new building will add shower facilities on the school premises. Currently, pupils access shower and changing facilities at the places where they undertake sporting activities. The new building will add further scope for leaders to develop the curriculum around sporting activity that takes place on the school site.
- Medicines are locked away in the medical room, which is appropriate for the intended use and is close to a toilet.

Paragraph 25

- The buildings are well maintained. The current school building is welcoming and organised in such a way as to ensure that pupils can work both individually and in groups.
- The new school building, which is planned to house 10 pupils if the material change is implemented, has clear plans for spacious classrooms. Furniture for these rooms has

been ordered. The new building will provide a pleasant and welcoming environment once it is completed. If the material change is implemented, there is space in the current school building to accommodate pupils while the new building is completed. The current school building will continue to be used for most pupils even when the new building is finished.

Paragraph 26, 27

- Lighting across both school buildings is appropriate, as are acoustics. Leaders take account of the way in which they intend to use classrooms and design the room accordingly. There are some lighting fixtures to be completed in the new building, but this work is well underway.

Paragraph 28

- Drinking water is available in all classrooms and is clearly labelled.
- A lighting system on taps in the toilets shows pupils when the water is a safe temperature to use. The water tested by the inspector was at an appropriate temperature in the current building. The new building still needs work completing to ensure that hot water is available for pupils to wash. This work is planned to be completed by the time the material change is implemented.

Paragraph 29

- An outdoor space at the back of the current school building is used for some of the planned sporting activities as well as for recreation, although most of the sporting activities take place away from the school site. The new building will add further outdoor space for the use of pupils if the material change is approved.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Leaders have carefully planned recruitment to the school so that they already have staff in place if the material change is approved. The specialisms that these staff bring have also been considered so that they are able to deliver the planned curriculum.
- The proprietor has a clear overview of plans for the school and there are clear lines of communication between the proprietor and school leaders to ensure that changes are implemented successfully and sustainably. There has been close working on the plans to finish the newly acquired building to an appropriate standard ready to accept pupils.
- Leaders undertake regular checks of compliance with the independent school standards and have a thorough knowledge of these standards. The inspector is assured that their understanding of these standards means that they can ensure that the new building will meet the standards required of premises in which children are educated.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is implemented.

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	145239
DfE registration number	392/6001
Inspection number	10298710

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 likely 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	Gordon Quince
Headteacher	Ms Susan Park
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,000
Telephone number	01913 003 663
Website	www.brenkleyschool.co.uk
Email address	info@icehome.co.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	23 to 25 November 2021

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	20	30	30

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	20	30

Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	20	30
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	20	up to 30
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	20	30

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	8	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	3

Information about this school

- The school currently caters for up to 20 secondary-age pupils with identified social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils come from local authorities in the surrounding area.
- The previous standard inspection took place in November 2021, when the school was judged to be good. A material change inspection also took place in July 2021 which raised the registered capacity of the school from 10 to 20.
- The school current address is 3–5 Brenkley Way, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6DS. The recently acquired premises are at 36 Brenkley Way, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6DS. The new premises are a very short walk from the current premises. If the material change is approved, up to 10 pupils in Year 7 would be taught in the new building, with pupils in Year 8 to Year 11 in the current building. Refurbishment work on the new building is currently underway and planned to be completed very soon.
- The name of the school changed from ID Academy to Brenkley School in 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to determine whether the school would meet the standards if the number of registered pupils was increased from 20 to 30.
- The school proposes to continue to cater for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs as well as pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- This was the second material change inspection since the school opened in November 2017.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and proprietor. He toured the current premises and the new school premises. He also reviewed documentation relating to the standards that the DfE requested to be checked.
- The inspector checked safeguarding arrangements and checks made on staff to ensure they are suitable to work with pupils.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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