

# Ness Point School

32/34 Gordon Road, Lowestoft NR32 1NL

**Inspection date**

13 September 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*

- The safeguarding policy is kept up to date in line with changes made to statutory guidance. It is also published on the proprietor body's website. This website includes information about the two schools the proprietor body oversees.
- Regarding the proposed school expansion, leaders' arrangements for safeguarding should scale up well. The 'daily debrief' will continue, allowing for appropriate information sharing and topical training. Currently, this meeting keeps staff vigilant, ensuring they spot and report any concerns about pupils at risk of harm. Also, those leaders who oversee safeguarding will be stationed across the two school sites. This too will aid staff in seeking advice and sharing concerns about pupils susceptible to harm.
- Leaders choose to use an online reporting tool to capture records relating to safeguarding. The same online reporting tool is used for other aspects of school, such as pupils' behaviour. It helps leaders to analyse the information they record, establishing trends to inform actions like staff training or pupils' personal, social and health education lessons. Occasionally, the records relating to safeguarding do not capture all the effective work leaders and staff do to ensure pupils remain safe. For example, omitting discussions had when consulting with children's services about a concern raised. Leaders are aware of this and have suitable plans to put this right.

#### *Paragraph 11*

- Policies relating to health and safety are clear and kept up to date. These policies are realised through workable systems and regular training. For example, regarding first aid, there is a suitable number of trained first-aiders. Staff administering first aid record incidents on an online reporting tool, making effective use of its checklists to inform the help they provide and to ensure comprehensive record keeping. Staff also notify a pupil's parent or carer when an accident occurs, involving them in appropriate follow-up actions. It assures pupils' parents that the school takes health and safety seriously.

### *Paragraph 12*

- The school oversees fire safety suitably. This includes weekly checks on emergency lighting and call-point testing to ensure pupils and adults remain safe. The system for checking adherence to fire safety regulations is comprehensive, ensuring the maintenance team can correct any issues swiftly. Staff receive annual training relating to fire safety, including how to use a fire extinguisher. Pupils are well versed in how to vacate the building safely were there to be a fire.

### *Paragraph 14*

- Leaders have considered the impact of the material change on supervision. The intention is to have one staff member for every two pupils. The school sees this as the best way to meet pupils' pastoral and learning needs. With the proposed school expansion, there are plans to offer a tutoring programme. It will involve a tiered approach to getting a pupil back into full-time education. With this, leaders are mindful of the need to ensure rigorous risk assessment, particularly where a staff member may work on a one-to-one basis with a pupil outside of school.

### *Paragraph 16*

- Risk assessments exist for activities that take place on or off site. These identify risks and how to overcome them clearly and concisely. Procedures for checking these documents ahead of on-site activities or educational visits are well considered and appropriate. For example, leaders afford staff the time to recce an activity or venue as opposed to relying on an organisation's model risk assessment. This then encourages staff to complete risk assessments with the specific needs of pupils from this school in mind. Leaders' checks on risk assessments are timely, leaving enough time for staff to make revisions ahead of the activity or trip taking place. This thorough approach keeps pupils and staff safe.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

### *Paragraph 18(2)–18(3)*

- There is a confident, clear understanding of what checks to complete on staff ahead of their appointment. These checks align with changes to statutory guidance. For instance, the school requests staff appointed after September 2022 show their birth certificate as part of their identity check.

### *Paragraph 19(2)–19(3)*

- The school's aim is for there to be substantive staff, so the use of contractors and agency staff is minimal. Nevertheless, there are clear procedures in place for when the school takes on temporary staff. For example, the written correspondence received specifies what checks were completed on the individual by their employer. The school can then make sure these checks align with those specified for the role in statutory guidance.

### *Paragraph 20(6)–20(6)(c)*

- The recorded checks on members of the proprietor body are in line with statutory guidance, such as taking account of whether they undertake regulated activity to

determine if they require a children's barred list check.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

### *Paragraphs 22–23(2), 25–28(2)(b)*

- The current premises continue to function fully as a school building. The procured building was previously a post-16 education and training institute, meaning it contains classrooms, offices, toilets and a first-aid room. For that reason, the building is set up well to serve as a school building. Careful consideration has been given to how best to use the rooms. For example, the room that has a walk-in storage space will be an art and science classroom. It will allow staff easy access to the equipment they and their pupils require during lessons.
- The facilities in the current and proposed premises will cater for the proposed increase in the number of pupils. There are appropriate acoustics, lighting and ventilation to ensure a comfortable place in which to work and learn. Drinking-water is clearly labelled, and pupils have access to water in lessons and sugar-free cordial at lunchtime. The hot water taps used for handwashing do not pose a scalding risk.

### *Paragraph 29*

- Though there is ample space indoors for pupils to come together and socialise, the existing and proposed premises' outdoor spaces are small and somewhat uninspiring. Pupils do access these spaces at break- and lunchtimes, playing with a ball or using the few pieces of outdoor gym equipment. In this way, the spaces are fit for purpose. Still, there are plans to spruce up what is there, aiming to make the spaces inviting places in which to convene. Also, pupils will soon take part in outdoor pursuits like orienteering at a local farm. This will help mitigate the premises having limited outdoor space.
- Through the physical education (PE) programme, the school mitigates the limitations of its outdoor space. PE lessons take place off site, making the most of local facilities such as playing fields and an equestrian centre. The school also funds memberships to the local gym. Therefore, in addition to using the facilities during PE lessons, pupils may also access the gym after school and at weekends to allow them to keep fit.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

### *Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)*

- There are longstanding arrangements in place that ensure leaders have the knowledge and expertise to consistently comply with the standards. This includes appointing advisers to audit specific standards, helping to support and inform leaders about school development so that standards do not slip.
- The well-being of pupils is at the heart of the school. This includes systems that safeguard pupils from harm, provide high-quality education and support pupils to go on to access further education and training so they may contribute positively to society.
- The plan to expand the school is suitably measured. Prior to admitting additional

pupils, the school will recruit, train and retain high-quality staff in an effort to maintain a high standard of care and education. Also, there is planned time for current pupils and staff to stress-test the facilities in the new building. This will help identify any issues so that these may be addressed before new pupils join the school.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

## **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	148425
DfE registration number	935/6029
Inspection number	10307097

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 special school
Proprietor	PCT Education
Headteacher	Gary Corbett
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £47,690
Telephone number	01502218220
Website	<a href="http://www.pct.education">www.pct.education</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:gary@pctcare.co.uk">gary@pctcare.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	8 to 10 November 2022

## 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	50	50

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	20	40

Number of part-time pupils	0	10
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	20	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	20	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	20	50

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	10
Number of part-time teaching staff	10	20
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

## Information about this school

- The school's registration with the Department for Education was approved in March 2021. It opened as an independent special school in May 2021. It had its first standard inspection in November 2022.
- Local authorities refer pupils to the school. These pupils commonly have an education, health and care plan regarding their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The proprietor body is responsible for two independent special schools. The headteacher, who took up post in September 2023, works across both schools in an executive capacity.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with leaders, including the director, the executive headteacher, a deputy headteacher, the quality assurance lead and the enrichment manager.
- The inspector held separate discussions with staff and pupils to gather their views about the school and their understanding of policies and procedures.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector reviewed policies and procedures, checked the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and read through records of safeguarding cases. The inspector also discussed safeguarding in meetings or discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- To inspect the premises, the inspector toured the site with the director and the quality assurance lead.
- The inspector reviewed a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures, risk assessments and plans relating to the recently procured building.

## Inspection team

Daniel Short, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector



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