

# Inspection of Compass Community School Lancashire

Granville Street, Briercliffe, Burnley BB10 2RA

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

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**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 Requires improvement

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

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

Pupils feel happy and valued at this school. They know that staff have their best interests at heart.

The school is ambitious for its pupils. Staff work as a close-knit team to meet pupils' special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND). They are effective in addressing the significant barriers to learning that pupils face. As a result, pupils achieve well from their individual starting points.

The school has high expectations for both pupils' behaviour and academic attainment. Pupils' self-esteem and engagement with learning improve considerably during their time at this school. Staff use a range of strategies to support pupils to successfully manage their own behaviour. Pupils behave well, display positive attitudes to learning and develop pride in their work.

Pupils' preparation for adulthood is a priority. The school carefully considers the purpose and value of learning opportunities in this regard. This equips pupils well for their next steps. For example, pupils learn how to prepare healthy meals. By participating in volunteer roles, pupils develop a range of life skills in the local community. They support the work of several charities. Pupils develop as active and caring citizens during their time at the school.

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

The school has created an ambitious curriculum. Pupils benefit from studying a wide range of subjects. The curriculum clearly sets out the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and when. All pupils who attend the school have SEND. The school has made sure that the curriculum meets the needs of these pupils.

Most pupils who join the school have been out of education for long periods of time. The school carries out careful checks when pupils arrive. This helps to identify their emotional, social and academic needs. In many subjects, staff use effective assessment strategies to check what pupils know and can do. They use this information as well as pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to inform learning activities. Staff break learning down into manageable steps. This helps pupils to achieve well in a wide range of subjects.

Pupils arrive at the school with gaps in their reading knowledge. This hinders their access to the wider curriculum. Pupils are supported to develop their appreciation of the work of different authors. The school provides a range of interesting texts for pupils to read. However, the school's plans to improve reading are still in the early stages of development. Staff have not received appropriate training to identify the gaps that pupils have in their reading knowledge. As a result, staff are not well-equipped to support pupils to improve their reading.

Pupils' behaviour improves significantly over time. They receive effective therapeutic support. They engage well with staff in lessons and at breaktimes. Many pupils have had poor attendance at their previous schools. The school's joint work with external agencies together with the provision of an engaging curriculum helps pupils' attendance to improve over time.

Pupils learn in appropriate ways about a range of other cultures and faiths. They benefit from visits to museums, churches and cathedrals. They learn to appreciate difference and diversity, in readiness for life in modern Britain. The school has established a carefully designed relationships and sex education curriculum. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships. They also enjoy a wide range of physical activities such as climbing, boxing, dance and ice-skating.

Pupils benefit from an effective programme of careers advice. This helps them to understand the choices available to them when they leave school. Staff help pupils prepare personal statements to support their college and job applications. When appropriate, leaders support pupils to access work experience opportunities with suitable employers. Pupils are supported to participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. These opportunities prepare pupils well for their next stage of education or training after leaving the school.

The proprietor keeps a careful check on the work of the school. The governing body further strengthens the proprietor's oversight. This ensures that the independent school standards ('the standards') are met consistently. The governing body offer effective support and challenge to the school. Governors have an accurate overview of the school's strengths and the school's priorities for further improvement.

The school site is a clean and a pleasant place for pupils to learn. There is a suitable health and safety policy and a range of effective risk assessments in place. These ensure that the premises are safe for pupils, staff and visitors. The school meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The school has also ensured that it complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. For example, there is an appropriate accessibility plan in place.

The school considers staff workload carefully. Staff have access to a range of resources to support their well-being. Staff appreciate the support they receive and are proud to work at the school.

The school communicates effectively with commissioners, parents and carers. It ensures that they are kept well informed about pupils' progress.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The school's procedures to improve pupils' reading skills are not fully developed. Some staff do not accurately identify the deficits in pupils' reading knowledge. Added to this, staff do not always know how to provide the support that pupils need in order to read with improved fluency and understanding. The school should ensure that all staff are appropriately trained to help pupils to improve their reading fluency and comprehension skills across the curriculum.

## **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>	148397
<b>DfE registration number</b>	888/6126
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10299262
<b>Type of school</b>	Independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 17
<b>Proprietor</b>	Compass Community Ltd
<b>Chair of the proprietor body</b>	Bernadine Gibson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Hughes (regional headteacher) Andrew Hill (head of school)
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£52,622
<b>Telephone number</b>	07738724903
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.compass-schools.org">www.compass-schools.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@compass-schools.org">admin@compass-schools.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 to 17 March 2022

## Information about this school

- The school is located in premises at Granville Street, Briercliffe, Burnley BB10 2RA.
- A significant number of the current teaching and support staff started to work at the school in 2023.
- The school has a small governing body. The chair of the governing body is independent of the running of the school. The other two members are employees of the proprietor body.
- Pupils typically have social, emotional and mental health needs. A small number have an EHC plan.
- All the pupils are looked after by their local authority.
- Pupils usually join the school with significant gaps in their learning. Many have suffered traumatic experiences and have not engaged in education for a long period of time prior to joining this school.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school received its previous standard inspection on 15 to 17 March 2022.

## 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the regional headteacher, the head of school, leaders, staff, members of the governing body and the chair of the proprietor body.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of a local authority responsible for placing pupils at the school.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with a therapist that works with the school.

- Inspectors checked the school's compliance with the standards and the statutory requirements. As part of these checks, the lead inspector toured the school premises, accompanied by a school leader.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English; art and design; and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, they held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of the school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at lunch times.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's online pupil and staff questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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