

# Compass Community School Willow Park

Willow Street, Sowerby Bridge, Halifax HX6 2BU

**Inspection date**

8 February 2024

**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

#### *Paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b)*

- The proprietor, school leaders and staff recognise that safeguarding is a key priority in school. It is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive regular training and safeguarding updates. These ensure that they are clear about what to do if a pupil has a concern.
- Despite the small size of the school, a significant number of staff have undertaken designated safeguarding lead training. This ensures that there is always a staff member available to deal with any safeguarding concerns. This is an advantage, since no further staff training will be needed should the planned material change be implemented.
- Safeguarding records are written effectively and show that the school takes timely and appropriate action when needed to support vulnerable pupils and their families.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in these paragraphs are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- The school has continued to expand and has outgrown its current premises. A new building has been purchased, but it will be some time before it is ready for pupils to use.
- In the interim, the school is planning to rent a building on a primary-school site. It is planned that this building will house 12 pupils. The building is in good repair and has two classrooms that would offer adequate accommodation for 12 pupils.
- The school's health and safety policy would apply to the temporary building. It is planned that the same regime of regular health and safety checks carried out in the current school would be replicated. This will ensure the same high levels of health and safety practice on all of the company's sites.

- A fire safety audit has already been carried out as the building is part of another school site. However, the proprietor has organised the company's own audit, which is due to take place soon. Any recommendations from this audit will be followed up by school leaders.
- The same rigorous risk assessment process is carried out in all of the company's schools. Leaders intend that this approach will be in place on the temporary site. Staff are well versed in using this approach, and this should ensure the continued safety of pupils.
- Leaders have risk assessed the new site and have ensured that pupils start and finish at different times to the primary-school pupils. The proposed temporary school building has a separate area for pupils' transport. This is situated away from the main school building. It is planned that pupils will be accompanied to and from their transport by members of staff.
- These measures are likely to ensure the safety of pupils from both schools.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c) and 21(6)*

- The school has a single central record that details the full range of pre-employment checks to be carried out on all staff and the proprietorial body. These include checks on staff who have worked abroad and checks on whether teachers and support staff have been prohibited from teaching.
- Leaders and staff who are involved in the recruitment of new staff have completed safer recruitment training. Discussion with school leaders shows that this guidance is diligently put into practice when new staff are appointed.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)*

- The school has identified a building in a local primary school that will act as temporary site for up to 14 younger pupils. The temporary building is self-contained and is situated away from the primary school in what was the caretaker's house. Two

classrooms are situated up a flight of stairs, which will be for the sole use of pupils from the Willow Park school.

- Two single-stall toilets are located adjacent to the classrooms, one for girls and one for boys.
- The classrooms are well lit and are adequately insulated to ensure that the acoustics in each room meet specifications.
- Pupils are able to access drinking water from a kitchen area on the ground floor. The hot water in sinks in all areas of the building poses no risk of scalding.
- The medical room is close to a third toilet, and a shower is planned for the room next door. Photographic evidence provided after the inspection shows the shower room completed.
- An extensive, fenced play area surrounds the prospective building, which is suitable for pupils to play in and to receive some aspects of physical education (PE). Other aspects of the PE curriculum will be taught off site in line with the practice in the current school.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

##### *Paragraph 32(1)(c)*

- The safeguarding policy is displayed on the school's website. Paper copies are available on request.
- This standard is likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

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

##### *Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(b) and 34(1)(c)*

- Leaders and the proprietor have ensured that all the standards checked in this inspection have been met.
- A key leadership priority is to actively promote pupils' welfare and social skills by completing challenges through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and well-being visits to a rescue farm.
- Leaders understand their pupils' needs well and are in the process of putting in place a well-researched and detailed plan that will ensure the safety of pupils as they move to a new school building.
- Leaders have also identified the likely risks associated with the move to a primary-school site and have put in place measures to ensure the safety of pupils from the Willow Park school, as well as pupils from Dene Field Community Primary School.
- The standards in this part are likely 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	148059
DfE registration number	381/6025
Inspection number	10320101

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	Compass Community Ltd
Chair	Kate East
Headteacher	Sarah Thornton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£71,000
Telephone number	01422 557273
Website	<a href="http://www.compass-schools.org/willow-park">www.compass-schools.org/willow-park</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:willow.park@compass-schools.org">willow.park@compass-schools.org</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	1 to 3 November 2022

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 18	6 to 18	6 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	32	45	45

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	33	45
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	33	45
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	33	45
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	33	45

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	6	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

## Information about this school

- The school is situated in the centre of Sowerby Bridge.
- The pupils who attend are mostly from the surrounding local authorities of Calderdale and Bradford.
- The school meets the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils also have additional needs, including related to autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- This is the school's second material change inspection.
- The school has outgrown its current building and has purchased a much larger building, which it is planned will be able to accommodate more pupils. This building, however, will not be ready to receive pupils until the autumn term of 2024 at the earliest.

- The school is currently exceeding its registration by five pupils. The school has asked for an increase in pupil numbers from 27 to 45 in order to manage the demand for places at the school.
- As an interim arrangement, the school has leased a building from Dene Field Community Primary School, Cousin Lane, Ovenden, Halifax HX2 8DQ.
- The building stands alone in the school grounds and was originally the caretaker's house. It is known as 'the school house'.
- It is planned that this building will accommodate up to 14 younger pupils who will attend school from 9am to 2.45pm. Pupils will arrive and leave from a dedicated drop-off point away from the main school entrance. All pupils have transport provided and will be accompanied to and from vehicles by staff.
- School leaders have provided an email from the headteacher of Dene Field Community Primary School confirming that the school is aware of and is happy with these arrangements.
- The classroom space in the caretaker's house is more than adequate for the proposed 14 pupils.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in November 2022.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) in response to the school's request for a material change to increase the number of pupils to 45.
- At the time of the inspection, the school had 32 pupils, which is five more than the 27 that it is currently registered to take.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and a representative of the proprietor.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to the safeguarding of children, health and safety, the school's fire regulations and its risk assessments.
- The inspector visited the school's prospective new site and carried out all checks relating to part 5 of the standards.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in November 2022.

## Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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