

Begdale House School

Begdale Road, Elm, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 0AZ

Inspection date

10 July 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, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school provides effective training to ensure staff know the signs of potential harm and what to do when concerns arise. Staff consistently follow the school's procedures to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need. The school works effectively with external agencies to protect and help vulnerable pupils.
- The school provides a well-considered curriculum for pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe. Staff are alert to the risks pupils face and ensure that the safeguarding curriculum is relevant to pupils' life experiences.
- The proprietor body uses company leaders and external agencies to check that the school's safeguarding practices are fit for purpose. Using these checks, the proprietor body ensures that any necessary improvements are made.

Paragraphs 11 and 12

- The school has in place an up-to-date health and safety policy and other related policies. Staff have received the training they need to implement the policies correctly.
- The school has a calendar of necessary maintenance and checks on the premises. Leaders act effectively when these checks raise concerns. Fire safety equipment is well maintained and fit for purpose.

Paragraph 14

- The proprietor body and leaders have a sensible plan to grow the school over time. The school has hired sufficient staff to cater for the increase in pupil numbers.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The school's risk assessment policy is up to date and clearly outlines the school's approach to managing risk. The school's risk assessments precisely identify specific risks. Staff ensure measures are in place to reduce risks as much as possible.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a) to 18(2)(f), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a) to 19(2)(d), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a) 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a) to 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a) to 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a) to 21(7)(b)

- The proprietor body ensures that leaders have been well trained to know how to recruit appropriate staff. All the necessary background checks have been undertaken regarding members of the proprietor body, leaders and staff.
- Leaders' single central record of background checks is well maintained.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- The proprietor body has overseen a complete refurbishment of the building and surrounding outdoor spaces previously used as a children's home. The rooms are well suited for the delivery of the curriculum. They have suitable acoustics, lighting and ventilation.
- The new building has appropriate toilet and washing facilities. Drinking-water is available and appropriately labelled. At the time of the inspection, hot water was not available at the new building, though the issue was in the process of being resolved. Nonetheless, adequate hot water is available to pupils at the adjacent building.
- The school has plenty of space for pupils to play and socialise outdoors.
- The medical room includes the necessary equipment with adjacent toilets.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- The school provides on its website school and company policies, including the school's safeguarding policy.
- The requirement in this standard is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) to 34(1)(c)

- Members of the proprietor body and leaders have demonstrated the knowledge and skills needed to make sure the school consistently meets the standards. The company has ongoing training for existing leaders and staff who wish to take up leadership positions.

- The proprietor body has procedures in place to check the quality of provision at the school. Leaders have robust quality assurance measures in place.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

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	136236
DfE registration number	873/6028
Inspection number	10324670

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	Keys Direct Care limited
Chair	David Manson
Headteacher	Jo Murray
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,700 to £54,400
Telephone number	01945 860055
Website	www.education.keyschildren.co.uk/school/begdale-house-school/
Email address	admin.begdaleschool@keys-group.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	6 to 8 June 2023

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	10 to 17	10 to 17	10 to 17
Number of pupils on the school roll	16	36	36

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	16	36
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	16	36
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	16	36
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	16	36

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	6	12
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	9

Information about this school

- The most recent standard inspection of Begdale House School was in June 2023. Inspectors determined that the school met all the standards. The overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good.
- The school uses two alternative provisions to enable pupils to study for accredited qualifications. These providers are not registered or inspected by Ofsted.
- The school provides education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Pupils are funded by their local authority. Many pupils join having missed long periods of education.
- The current headteacher was appointed in January 2021. She is also the headteacher of another school in Keys Group, Westfield House School.
- The school does not use agency staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the chair of the proprietor body, company leaders, the headteacher, teachers and members of support staff. The inspector also looked at documents regarding the relevant standards and toured the buildings.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to determine whether the school would be likely to meet the standards if granted permission to increase the number on roll from 16 to 36 pupils.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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