Inspection of Compass Community School Staffordshire

Mountfields House, Off Squirrel Way, Epinal Way, Loughborough LE11 3GE

Inspection dates:	3 December, and 9 and 10 December 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	**Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this caring school. When they arrive in the morning, they are greeted by warm and friendly staff. Staff fully understand each pupil's unique background and challenges and take the time to build strong and trusted relationships. Pupils feel safe in school because they know that staff value and care for them.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils rise to these expectations and, in many cases, achieve more than they thought possible. Many pupils arrive at the school reluctant to learn after periods of disrupted education. The school's curriculum prioritises therapy and well-being support so pupils settle quickly. Pupils achieve the qualifications they need to access their next steps in education.

Behaviour in and around the school is excellent. Skilled staff work with pupils to help them understand and manage their own behaviour. Behaviour plans are detailed and clearly identify ways to help pupils be successful.

The school expertly promotes the extensive personal development of pupils. Pupils have access to a wide, rich set of experiences that develop pupils' character effectively such as resilience and integrity. Opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests are exceptional. For example, pupils recorded their own Christmas charity single.

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

The school has developed a broad curriculum that enables pupils to learn the important skills and knowledge they need to be successful in their future lives. Pupils arrive with varied starting points, some with significant gaps in their knowledge. Staff carry out effective checks to quickly establish what these gaps are. Pupils study a personalised curriculum that is well matched to their individual starting points.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. All staff are relentless in their determination to ensure pupils learn to read. The reading curriculum sets out the carefully chosen texts that pupils will study over time. For those pupils who need additional support with early reading, the school's phonics scheme enables staff to identify and address gaps in phonics knowledge. Some pupils arrive at school as reluctant readers. Staff work innovatively to break down barriers to reading and make it an enjoyable experience. For example, pupils regularly visit the local library, have stories read to them and start every day reading a book with a slice of toast.

Overall, pupils achieve well. In most subjects, adults have the expertise they need to teach the curriculum effectively. Staff are clear about what they want the pupils to know and when. Effective teaching builds pupils' knowledge well. Staff check pupils' learning and address any emerging gaps and misconceptions. However, at times, staff do not extend the learning of pupils who have mastered their learning and are

ready to learn new content. This hinders some pupils from achieving as well as they could.

All pupils arrive at the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are skilled in supporting pupils with their social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is exceptionally well planned and is a golden thread across all aspects of school life. Staff carefully plan learning based on each individual pupil's age and level of understanding. This means pupils get the appropriate bespoke learning at the right time. For example, each pupil has a bespoke programme of relationships and sex education and health education that is appropriate to their individual needs. The therapeutic work provided alongside the extensive PSHE curriculum ensures that pupils get the support they need to enable them to be ready and able to learn.

Pupils make demonstrable improvements to their behaviour during their time at the school. Staff are experts in supporting pupils in managing their behaviour and teaching them how to behave in different situations. For example, pupils are supported to manage their behaviour when on trips and visits. In lessons, pupils work well and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy school and appreciate the care and support they receive. This is reflected in the very high attendance of pupils.

Pupils have regular and meaningful opportunities to engage with the world of work and experience it in a planned and coherent way. Pupils receive appropriate careers advice and guidance. All pupils are supported in completing work experience and volunteering in the community. The way the school goes about ensuring that pupils move on to appropriate destinations is exemplary.

The school ensures all pupils flourish. Leaders are relentless in identifying pupils' gifts and talents. Pupils are taught about healthy and positive relationships, safe social media use and healthy lifestyles. This work is very effective in preparing them for later life.

Staff are proud of working at the school and value the support they get from leaders. The proprietor body has a wealth of skills and experience. This enables it to support leaders and hold them accountable for implementing the school's vision effectively. It has strong oversight of the school's work and ensures the school meets its statutory duties, including compliance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proprietor body has ensured all the independent school standards are consistently met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils who are ready the opportunity to move on to new learning quickly enough. This means that those pupils do not get the opportunity to deepen their knowledge as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the expertise to know when to give pupils new work so that they achieve their full potential.

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

Unique reference number	147780
DfE registration number	860/6068
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10342161
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Compass Community Ltd
Chair	Kate East
Headteacher	Corinne Plant
Annual fees (day pupils)	£70,100
Telephone number	01538 809055
Website	www.compass-schools.org
Email address	education.compliance@compass-schools.org
Date of previous inspection	12 to 14 October 2021

Information about this school

- Compass Community School Staffordshire is an independent special school that caters for pupils with SEMH needs. Most pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils are placed at the school by several local authorities from across the country.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection started on Tuesday 3 December. It was paused in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. Inspectors returned on Monday 9 December to complete the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher and the regional director of schools. The lead inspector met with a representative of the proprietor body and the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, PSHE and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and support staff, spoke to a few pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work. Inspectors also visited other lessons and looked at pupils' work from other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to all pupils around the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection, including during breaktimes.
- 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 carried out other activities to check that the school meets the independent school standards. These included a check of the school premises and wider work to comply with health and safety laws (including fire safety). Inspectors considered the school's approach to risk management. Inspectors also checked the relevant policies and the school's website.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the staff survey.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Hermitt	Ofsted Inspector
Bianka Zemke	His Majesty's Inspector

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