

ISP School

Castlewood Farm, Conyer Road, Teynham, Kent ME9 9EA

Inspection dates

27 October 2021

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 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)

- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is given a high priority by leaders and staff. Much of this is delivered within the day-to-day curriculum, including through the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education schemes of work. Additionally, leaders feel this aspect is woven throughout all that the school does, underpinned by its ethos of promoting tolerance and understanding.
- Leaders are clear that they need to promote British values 'actively'. They see this as a key strand of their work to prepare pupils for their next steps in education, not least because of the context of the school and the ethnic mix of pupils who attend. Racism is not tolerated. Bullying, including online bullying or harassment, is also dealt with appropriately, including with the involvement of parents or carers if required.
- Although there is a PSHE scheme in place, leaders ensure that staff are flexible in their approach to delivering this. They understand the importance of ensuring that pupils are supported to deal with the real life, everyday problems that challenge them both in and outside of school.
- Recent restrictions due to COVID-19 have hindered aspects such as visits outside of school to support pupils' cultural development. However, pupils continue to learn about tolerance, respect and understanding of the different cultures or beliefs of others, including through the use of online seminars with people of different faiths, for instance.
- Leaders have carefully considered the impact of increasing pupil numbers, especially when the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taken into account. They have ensured that all standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 9–16(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are strong. Procedures to recruit new staff include appropriate pre-employment checks. The safeguarding policy, which is published on the school's website, is compliant with current guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- Suitable behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place. Staff are subject to ongoing training to ensure that they understand the complex needs of pupils at the school. Leaders ensure that levels of communication are high between staff, pupils, parents and carers in order to pre-empt potential problems before they arise.
- Staff-to-pupil ratios are high. Routines are well established at the school. Policies and other aspects such as individual risk assessments for pupils are all in place. Leaders consider these to be working documents that constantly evolve. Again, leaders know that good communication and timely information sharing is key to protecting the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff.
- Accommodation at the school is well maintained. This includes the new facilities that will provide additional capacity for classrooms, toilets and communal spaces if the material change is approved. A new fire risk assessment for the whole site has recently been completed by a specialist external company.
- First aid, risk assessment and health and safety policies are all in place. Key members of staff have attended appropriate first aid training. The school also has access to a trained mental health first aider.
- Leaders have ensured that all of these standards are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

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

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(2)(e), 18(3)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3)–21(7)(b)

- Leaders understand the checks that need to be made to ensure that staff, supply staff, directors and other adults in the school are suitable to work with pupils. Key leaders have undertaken safer recruitment training. Processes for recruiting staff are sound and carried out diligently.
- The single central record of checks on adults is compliant with current guidelines. This includes checks on new staff and ongoing checks on staff who have worked at the school for many years. It is checked by a representative of the proprietor at regular intervals.
- School leaders have ensured that all relevant standards in Part 4 are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2)–29(1)(b)

- A new 'temporary' accommodation block has recently been completed. This sits adjacent to the established school buildings. Leaders state that the new addition might be in place for up to five years but are developing plans to provide permanent

accommodation within three. The 'temporary' accommodation is of high quality. Her Majesty's Inspector considers it to be fit for its intended purpose and suitable to meet the requirements of Part 5 if the material change is approved.

- The school is situated on a working farm. Access to the school is safe and secure. Boundaries between the agricultural site and school are clear. The school buildings and associated resources are of high quality. There are spacious grounds, including sports pitches, a multi-use games area, allotment and poly-tunnel facilities, as well as suitable spaces for pupils to play.
- The main school building has a dedicated and well-equipped medical room. Other aspects covered by the requirements of Part 5 such as clearly labelled drinking water, suitable internal and external lighting and appropriate toilet facilities are all in place.
- Acoustics within classrooms and communal spaces appear to be suitable. The school site is maintained well. Internal and external décor are inviting and bright, creating an attractive environment for pupils and staff.
- School leaders have ensured that all relevant standards in Part 5 are likely to continue 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)

- Leaders at all levels have prepared carefully for the changes needed to ensure that the school continues to meet the independent school standards should the material change be approved.
- The proprietor has clear strategic oversight of plans to expand the school. Leaders have sensibly considered the impact that additional pupil numbers will have on pupils who already attend the school. Their rationale for an increase in pupil numbers is sound. Additional accommodation is now ready. Additional staffing capacity is available if and when required.
- Leaders and the proprietor demonstrate a clear understanding of the independent school standards. All aspects of the independent school standards assessed as part of this inspection were found likely to be met if the material change is approved. Part 8 is also likely to continue 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	119015
DfE registration number	886/6065
Inspection number	10183237

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	Integrated Services Programme
Chair	Jo August
Headteacher	Carole Cox
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,000 to £49,000
Telephone number	01795 523 900
Website	ispschools.org.uk
Email address	Teynham.school@ispchildcare.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	15–17 January 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 18	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	42	64	64

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	46	64
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	46	64
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	46	64
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	46	64

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	14	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1

Information about this school

- ISP School is a small special school located in rural Kent. All pupils have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and/or autism spectrum disorder as their primary need.
- The school is currently registered for up to 42 pupils in the age range seven to 18. The Department for Education (DfE) recently granted a temporary amendment to the registration to increase the permitted number of pupils to 46.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in January 2019 when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good and all the independent school standards were found to be met.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE as a result of a request by the proprietor to increase the number of pupils from up to 42 to up to 64. This was the first material change inspection in respect of this particular request.
- The inspector visited the school during its autumn half-term break. He held a range of meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, a curriculum leader, the school's special educational needs coordinator and the proprietor's director of education. He also held a telephone conversation with the chair of the proprietorial body.
- The inspector toured the school's premises and accommodation, including new classrooms and communal areas created to cater for the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- The inspector checked a range of policies and documents, including the school's single central record. He also reviewed the school's website and other records regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff linked to the independent school standards assessed during the inspection.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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