

Castle Garden School

Pewely Hill, Guildford GU1 3SQ

Inspection date

4 April 2023

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1)–2(2)(i)

- The school's curriculum is designed to support pupils in becoming 'happy and confident individuals with qualifications and achievements that will support them in the future'. It is likely to provide suitable breadth of learning as required by the independent school standards (the standard).
- Pupils will learn a variety of subjects, including English, mathematics, art, dance and physical development. Curriculum plans set out what will be taught in each subject. The content is sequenced appropriately and is likely to ensure progression in learning if delivered effectively.
- Pupils will follow one of three 'pathways', according to their needs and starting points. Each pathway will be based either on the early years foundation stage framework, the national curriculum, or a combination of both.
- Pupils are likely to have a wide range of needs in addition to their primary need of autism spectrum disorder. The curriculum is designed to be flexible, with content and delivery adapted according to pupils' individual needs. Each pupil's education, health and care plan (EHC plan) will provide the starting point for teaching. These, combined with discussions with parents and assessments completed when pupils join the school, will be used to target specific areas of need. Leaders have the knowledge and expertise required to ensure that this is done well.
- The curriculum will be enriched with a programme of special events, trips and visitors. Leaders intend these to be used to 'broaden young people's experiences, as well as giving them an opportunity to apply their skills in varied situations'. They plan to make full use of the school's proximity to local amenities, such as parkland, an ancient monument and the local high street, to support pupils' personal, social and physical development.
- Therapeutic input will play a key role in the curriculum and will include speech and language therapy, communication therapy and occupational therapy, as well as input by an educational psychologist. Teachers and teaching assistants will work closely with therapists. Therapies will be allocated according to pupils' individual needs and their

EHC plans.

- Leaders have identified a suitable phonics programme to support early reading skills. Assessments will be used to identify pupils' starting points in reading. Teachers will use a range of strategies to support pupils at the earliest stages of reading, such as drawing attention to sounds in the environment, using activities to develop awareness of rhyme and rhythm, as well as reading to their pupils regularly. Leaders will provide training to ensure that staff are knowledgeable about the teaching of reading.
- Physical education will be taught on site, as well as in the local community, and will include the use of a local leisure centre and a swimming pool.
- Leaders are acutely aware of the school's responsibility to help to prepare pupils for future independence. They have developed a personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme which includes an appropriate range of subjects to support pupils' personal development. Fundamental British values will be promoted through the taught curriculum and throughout school life.
- The school's relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum takes account of statutory guidance. Leaders intend to put the school's RSE policy on its website once active. They are planning a parents' evening to consult with parents about the content of the RSE curriculum.
- It is likely that all the standards in this part will be met if the planned curriculum is delivered effectively.

Paragraphs 3–3(j), 4

- Leaders intend to recruit well-qualified and experienced staff. They report a strong field in response to a recent recruitment drive and have already appointed a teacher, a teaching assistant, two therapy assistants and two administrative staff. Arrangements to make further appointments in the coming weeks are at an advanced stage.
- New staff will complete a suite of training as part of the induction process, as well as ongoing training. Leaders will monitor curriculum delivery and provide support for individual members of staff as needed.
- Staff will assess pupils' learning and well-being continuously. These assessments will be supplemented by more formal half-termly discussions about pupils' learning. Each pupil will have an individualised learning record which will be used to track progress against their targets. Parents' views of how well their child is learning at home will contribute to the ongoing assessment process.
- It is likely that all the standards in this part will be met.

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

Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)

- Leaders recognise that pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties, and associated medical and health needs, which represent significant barriers to learning. They aim to provide a 'holistic' approach to helping pupils to overcome these barriers.
- Teachers and therapists will work together to identify pupils' personal, social and emotional needs. They will tailor support according to pupils' individual contexts and circumstances.

- Equality is given suitable attention in the school's PSHE programme. Pupils will learn about different faiths and beliefs through the school's curriculum. Pupils will also learn about world religions and will explore questions and themes such as 'What makes a place special?', 'What can we learn from different symbols?' and 'What are values and why are they important?'
- Leaders will promote a consistent approach to behaviour management so that pupils are clear about expectations. Pupils will be supported to recognise the role that they can play in managing their own behaviour. They will be expected to listen carefully to their teachers and encouraged to respect others.
- Leaders are committed to providing regular opportunities for pupils to interact with members of the local community. Activities such as visits to local cafes and shops will be used to support the development of personal and social skills, as well as build pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- It is likely that the standard in this part will be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7–7(b)

- The school's safeguarding policy complies with the latest statutory guidance and will be published on the school's website. It provides a comprehensive range of information, including clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Links with related policies provide additional information about specific aspects of safeguarding, such as child-on-child abuse and the risks of radicalisation.
- The headteacher is currently the designated safeguarding lead until further appointments are made to the senior leadership team. He has completed all required safeguarding training and is knowledgeable about safeguarding matters. The headteacher is experienced in ensuring the safety of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Staff will complete safeguarding training regularly. This will be supplemented with daily staff briefings which will be used to share key information, including revisiting key aspects of the safeguarding policy. Staff will be encouraged to understand that 'it's everyone's job to ask questions'. All safeguarding concerns will be recorded on a centralised electronic system in a timely manner. Leaders intend to complete regular checks on staff's safeguarding knowledge.
- The school site is securely fenced and well maintained. Leaders have formulated a sensible travel plan to manage the start and end of the school day safely.

Paragraphs 9–9(c), 10

- The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies are likely to achieve leaders' aim to secure positive behaviour if implemented consistently and effectively.
- The behaviour policy recognises pupils' contexts and specific vulnerabilities due to their needs. Leaders aim to provide a 'consistent, supportive and well-supervised environment where children and young people feel safe and secure'. The development of strong relationships between staff and pupils will be central to promoting and maintaining good behaviour.
- Positive handling will be used occasionally and only where a pupil's behaviour creates

a risk for pupils or staff or the risk of serious damage to property. Staff will be trained in its use, although the emphasis will be on intervening at an early stage to avoid its use wherever possible.

- Leaders intend to monitor behaviour records carefully to spot and respond to any patterns of behaviour and to review progress in individual cases.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16–16(b)

- The school's health and safety, first-aid and risk assessment policies are fit for purpose and provide a secure framework for staff and pupils.
- Leaders are alert to potential risks, with suitable mitigating actions identified to reduce the risk. For instance, a section of the playground has been resurfaced to ensure that pupils can use the newly installed play equipment safely. Secure external doors with entry fobs have been fitted and the premises have been rewired.
- Leaders are making appropriate arrangements to ensure that pupils will be supervised properly. They have suitable procedures in place to ensure that staff are appointed with the relevant qualifications, experience and aptitude. Leaders plan to admit a small number of pupils in the first instance, gradually increasing the number of pupils on roll over time.
- An independent fire risk assessment has been completed. All required actions have been addressed. New fire extinguishers and fire blankets have been installed throughout the building. Fire exit routes and procedures are clearly identified.
- It is likely that the standard in this part will be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(3), 19(2)–19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(7)(b)

- Leaders will manage staff safeguarding and recruitment checks. The directors and governors will monitor arrangements to ensure that all are completed fully and in a timely manner.
- The single central record was in place and complete at the time of the inspection. It is set up in a way which is likely to ensure that it will meet statutory requirements when staff recruitment has been completed.
- It is likely that the standard in this part will be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(2), 25, 26, 27–27(b), 28(1)–28(2)(b), 29(1)–29(1)(b)

- The proposed school will occupy a Victorian building which was formerly used as a school. The building has been completely refurbished and redecorated to a high standard. The school comprises a range of rooms, including several classrooms, a well-equipped kitchen for use with pupils and a professional kitchen for the preparation of school meals. The building also has a suitably equipped medical room, with a nearby toilet and shower. The original Victorian windows have been fitted with safety film and admit plenty of light throughout the building.
- The current classrooms are bright and well equipped. However, there is insufficient space to accommodate the number of pupils proposed by the proprietor given the

likely complexity of pupils' needs.

- Suitable toilet facilities are available for boys, girls and staff, as well as showering facilities. Drinking water is clearly labelled and will be freely available to pupils.
- The school's premises include two outdoor areas. One is equipped with newly installed play equipment. The other is divided into a series of footpaths and borders. Both areas are securely fenced.
- It is likely that all the standards in this part will be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)–32(4)(c)

- Leaders are knowledgeable about the requirements of the standards in relation to the publication of information on the school's website. They intend to activate the school's website once the proposed school has been approved by the Department for Education (DfE).
- Leaders intend to report to parents regularly about their children's academic and personal development. They value parents' views and look forward to working with them to support pupils' progress. Leaders are experienced in managing and overseeing arrangements for annual reviews.
- It is likely that all the standards in this part will be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33–33(k)

- The school's complaints policy complies with DfE guidance and with the requirements of the standards, including details about the timescale for each stage of the complaints process. Leaders aim to resolve complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Leaders will publish the complaints policy on the school's website once it is active.
- It is likely that the requirements of this standard will be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- Leaders have extensive experience in providing education for pupils with complex SEND, including autism spectrum disorder. They are accustomed to working with teams of teaching staff and therapists.
- The directors have a well-established set of policies and procedures to ensure oversight of the school's work. They will use a suite of reports covering a range of topics, such as admissions, attendance, staffing and safeguarding, to inform their work. Regular governance meetings will be used to monitor the school's work and to hold leaders to account.
- The directors have commissioned an independent monitoring group which will report back to the board of directors. School visits will be used to cross-check information provided about the school's performance.
- It is likely that the requirements of this standard will be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders are committed to ensuring equality and inclusion and to 'challenging negative attitudes about disability'. The school's accessibility plan states their commitment to providing 'an accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs'.

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.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149670
DfE registration number	936/6066
Inspection number	10278249

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	P Bloom Ltd
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Rob Walton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£66,000 to £91,000
Telephone number	0777 187 5414
Website	Not applicable
Email address	ciaran.walsh@hmschool.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 11	5 to 11
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	36	32

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- There is insufficient space to accommodate the number of pupils proposed by the proprietor given the likely complexity of pupils' needs.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	36
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	36
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	36
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	36

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The school intends to cater wholly for pupils with SEND. All pupils will have an EHC plan and their places will be funded by a local authority.
- Leaders intend to specialise in providing education for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. Pupils may also have a range of associated conditions such as learning difficulties, physical needs and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school will be housed in a single-storey building which was formerly used as a school.

Information about this inspection

- The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the school is likely to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 if the DfE decides to register it. This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector discussed and reviewed all relevant proposals and plans for the new school with the regional director and the headteacher. She also had a telephone discussion with the proprietor's chief operating officer.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of policies, documents and records presented by the proprietor as evidence of the school's likelihood to meet the standards. She also checked the single central record.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023