

Hopefields Education CiC

Hopefields School, 16 High Force Road, Riverside Park, Middlesbrough TS2 1RH

Inspection date

12 December 2024

Overall outcome

**The school meets the independent school standards relevant to the material change.
The material change has already been implemented**

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), and 32(1)(c)

- The proprietor ensures that all staff receive comprehensive and regular safeguarding training to ensure that they are alert to potential safeguarding concerns.
- The proprietor has devised several policies to support pupils' safety and welfare. These include, among others, a detailed safeguarding policy, an online safety policy and an anti-bullying policy. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum for personal, social and health education, as well as educational visits.
- The proprietor commissions support from several external agencies to ensure that there is a robust safeguarding culture in the school. This includes an annual safeguarding audit.
- The proprietor demonstrates a secure understanding of local, contextual safeguarding risks.
- The school provides pupils with a range of opportunities to support their wider welfare.

Paragraph 11

- The proprietor has drawn up an effective health and safety policy which is published on the school's website. The policy sets out the responsibilities of different stakeholders within the school. It takes account of all aspects of health and safety, such as health and hygiene, electrical safety and site security.
- As part of their induction, new staff are required to familiarise themselves with the health and safety policy.

Paragraph 12

- The proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The proprietor commissions an external agency to conduct a fire risk assessment of the premises. The feedback from this assessment has been acted on. Another assessment is already scheduled for 2025.
- Clear fire evacuation procedures are in place. Visitors are informed of these on arrival at the school.
- The school conducts regular fire evacuation drills.

Paragraph 14

- The school is not intending to appoint any more staff if the proposed increase in pupil numbers is approved. However, current staffing levels are more than sufficient to ensure that pupils will remain properly supervised should the proposed increase in pupil numbers be approved.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable risk assessment policy is in place.
- Risk assessments are completed for educational visits. As well as making use of the external provider's risk assessment, the school produces its own to ensure any risks to pupils are identified.
- Individual safety plans and risk assessments are used for pupils where necessary.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve the implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), and 18(3)

- All required pre-employment checks are made on staff. The proprietor has ensured that robust recruitment procedures are in place. These include a requirement for candidates to complete the school's own application form, and telephone calls to referees to validate references.

Paragraphs 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), and 19(3)

- The proprietor ensures that all appropriate checks are made on supply staff prior to them commencing employment at the school. On arrival at the school, leaders make checks to confirm the identity of supply staff. Supply staff are expected to undertake several visits to the school before they begin their employment.

Paragraphs 20(6) to 20(6)(c)

- All required pre-employment checks are made on members of the proprietor board.

Paragraphs 21(1) to 21(3)(b), 21(5) to 21(5)(c), and 21(6)

- There is an electronic single central record in place. The proprietor commissions external support to ensure that the single central record is well maintained. The

school's single central record records all relevant checks on school staff and the dates on which those checks were made.

- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the material change.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 24(1) to 24(1)(b), and 24(2)

- The premises have adequate toilets and washing facilities for the proposed number of pupils.
- Pupils come dressed in sportswear on the day of their physical education (PE) lessons. These lessons take place during the afternoons so that pupils leave school immediately afterwards. The school does not have its own changing and shower facilities. It makes use of other local schools and gymnasiums where these facilities are available should pupils need them.
- There is a medical room for the short-term treatment of pupils. The room has a sink, first aid equipment and a bed. The room is located near to toilets.

Paragraphs 25 to 28(2)(b)

- The premises are well maintained to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Rooms that contain potentially hazardous tools and equipment, such as knives and machinery, are kept locked.
- The premises, including the toilet facilities, are suitable to accommodate the increased in pupil numbers if the change is agreed.
- One of the directors undertakes a health and safety analysis periodically. This analysis identifies actions to be followed up. It shows that the school takes account of legislation and guidance in relation to health and safety.
- Classrooms are spacious, with plenty of natural light. They are suitably insulated to ensure that teaching is not disrupted by external noise.
- Externally, adequate lighting is fitted to ensure the safety of those entering and leaving the premises.
- Pupils have access to drinking water as well as a variety of fruit juices.

Paragraphs 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- There is a small outdoor space at the side of the premises. This is adequate for the proposed number of pupils. It is secured by fencing and a locked gate. There is a range of equipment for pupils to use, including a swing and planting boxes. Pupils do not use this space for PE lessons, but it would be adequate should they need to.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the material change.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor is also the headteacher. They have a secure understanding of the independent school standards and, over time, have demonstrated their capacity to meet these consistently.
- Leaders and the proprietor fulfil their responsibilities to promote the well-being of pupils. They have fully considered all aspects of the school's provision and pupils' well-being in their proposed increase to the number of pupils on the school's roll.
- The proprietor has devised a monitoring and evaluation schedule to enable them to make checks on the quality of education that pupils receive.
- The proprietor commissions a wide range of external support to ensure that the school operates effectively.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material changes.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school is likely to meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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	149109
DfE registration number	806/6005
Inspection number	10371557

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	Hopefields Education CIC
Chair	Emily Greenhalgh
Headteacher	Emily Greenhalgh
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,567 to £47,852
Telephone number	01642 205233
Website	www.hopefields.org.uk
Email address	admin@hopefields.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	4 to 6 July 2023

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	37	40	40

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	37	40
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	37	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	30	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	29	Not applicable

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	10	10
Number of part-time teaching staff	8	8
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

Information about this school

- The school's last standard inspection took place from 4 to 6 July 2023.
- The school caters primarily for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not use any external alternative provision.
- The school has a main site on the outskirts of Middlesbrough. The address for this site is 16 High Force Road, Middlesbrough TS2 1RH. Pupils also attend a farm at the nearby village of Wolviston. The address for this site is Cross Farm, Wynyard Road, Wolviston TS22 5LL.

- The school is registered to admit 35 pupils. The school currently has 37 pupils on roll and has therefore exceeded the maximum number of pupils on roll that it is registered to admit. The school has not notified the DfE that it is operating beyond its registration agreement.

Information about this inspection

- The DfE commissioned this inspection as the school has applied to increase the number of pupils on roll from 35 to 40.
- This was the first material change inspection in respect of this particular change that the school has applied to make.
- To check compliance with the independent school standards, the inspector had a tour of the premises and met with the headteacher. The inspector also reviewed the school's fire safety arrangements and several policies. These included the health and safety policy and risk management policy.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the school's single central record and met with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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