Inspection of Compass Community School Boleyn Park

8 Trinity Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 7PU

Inspection dates:	13 to 15 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Sixth-form provision	**Insufficient evidence**
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	**Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and settled in this harmonious school. They have positive and trusting relationships with staff. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils know that staff value their views and want the best for them. They understand that they need to focus on their learning in lessons. Pupils try their hardest to live up to staff's high expectations. This may mean having a sensory break to help to get them back on track. Pupils progress well through the school's curriculum.

Pupils learn to interact with others sociably. They watch staff who show how to take turns in two- or three-way conversations effectively. Pupils know that sometimes they may not get communication right. When this happens, staff help pupils to understand the impact of their words and actions. This means that pupils get better at recognising when someone may have hurt feelings and when to make amends. There are no concerns about bullying.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities beyond formal lessons. They like swimming, cooking and visiting the local farm to look after the ferrets. Pupils take it in turns to be ambassadors for the school. Making a difference in their school experience is important to them. They are proud to do so, for example, by asking for a blazer for the school uniform because they 'want to look smart'.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils will achieve in the school. Pupils can gain a range of qualifications, including GCSEs. They enter the school with specific learning difficulties as well as social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. When pupils start at the school, leaders quickly put in place the therapy and care that pupils need. They check carefully what pupils know and can do. This informs adaptations to the curriculum to meet individual needs.

In most subjects, pupils follow a coherent and well-planned curriculum that helps them to know and understand key ideas. Leaders ensure that pupils learn the skills they need to function in society. This includes applying their mathematical knowledge in social situations such as shopping. Teachers use pupils' EHC plans to inform short-term learning targets that help pupils achieve well. They consistently use strategies linked to pupils' support plans to make appropriate adaptations to lessons and the physical environment to ensure curriculum access for all pupils.

The adaptation of the company's reading curriculum is not as strong. Leaders have not considered carefully enough the choice of texts and the order in which pupils study them. Leaders are introducing pupils to lengthy and challenging texts, but some are too difficult for pupils to understand. As a result, pupils' reading confidence and fluency are still developing.

Communication is a priority. Teachers place emphasis on listening closely and ask pupils to summarise their learning. They help pupils reshape what they say so it is accurate and their subject vocabulary widens. Teachers and support staff use a variety of ways to help pupils express what they mean. This is done either through the written word, through pictures or verbally. Staff chat informally about key concepts from lessons during social times. For example, pupils chatted with staff about the absorption of light, covered in their science lessons, while sitting in the school's garden. This helps pupils to remember the subject content.

Staff know the pupils very well. They are thoughtful in their use of space on this small site. This is because they know that too many adults can leave pupils feeling overwhelmed. They are quick to notice when pupils are uncomfortable or need a sensory break. The calm intervention by staff means that there is little disruption to lessons.

Pupils' wider development is catered for well. There is a strong focus on well-being. Pupils have access to a range of therapies to help support their social and emotional development. This offer, as well as the life skills lessons, helps pupils to navigate social situations. Through the relationships and sex education curriculum, pupils learn essential knowledge about relationships. Pupils have access to impartial careers advice and learn employability skills through lessons that focus on these. They also have the opportunity to undertake work experience. Pupils proudly share photographs of their achievements, such as tiling or plastering a wall.

The proprietor body and governors know the school well. They challenge and support leaders appropriately on how they are delivering the school's improvement plan. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The proprietor body makes sure that staff have access to a comprehensive package of training for their roles. Governors keep a close eye on staff's workload and well-being. They also make sure the school complies with its statutory obligations and schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are thorough in their approach to safeguarding. This includes undertaking the necessary checks when they appoint new staff. They have effective systems in place so that staff receive timely and helpful information about pupils' welfare. Appropriate links with external agencies ensure that pupils and their families get the help and support they need.

Leaders provide staff with specific training for managing risk with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff are quick to notice any signs in behaviour, appearance or emotions that may indicate a cause for concern. They report diligently, using the school's safeguarding system. Leaders review risk assessments regularly so that pupils remain safe when on and off site.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not considered carefully enough the choice of texts that pupils' study and how teachers develop pupils' reading skills. This limits the development of pupils' confidence and fluency in reading. Leaders should fine tune the curriculum planning for English and its adaptations so that it better meets pupils' needs, thus enabling them to experience greater success and enjoyment with their reading.

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	149112
DfE registration number	882/6085
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10267731
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent School
Age range of pupils	8 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Proprietor	Compass Community Ltd
Chair	Bernadine Gibson
Headteacher	Konrad Katarzynski
Annual fees (day pupils)	£71,500 to £96,900
Telephone number	01702 416823
Website	www.compass-schools.org
Email address	konrad.katarzynski@compass-schools.org

Information about this school

- The school was first registered on 12 August 2022. This is the first full standard inspection of the school.
- The proprietor body is Compass Community Ltd. Some responsibilities for governance have been delegated to a governing body.
- The school caters for up to five pupils aged eight to 18 years of age. Pupils are referred by local authorities. Most pupils have experienced significant disruption to their schooling.
- Pupils have EHC plans relating to their specific learning difficulties, SEMH needs or autism.
- Although the school is registered to have primary-age pupils and students post-16, no pupils are on roll in those phases. Current pupils are in Year 7 and Year 9. Therefore, due to insufficient evidence, amnesty has been granted for the judgment of the sixth-form provision.
- The school has used supply staff.
- The school does not currently use 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.

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the chair of the proprietor body, the company's directors for education and quality assurance, the chair of the governing body, the executive headteacher, the head of school and the staff.
- The lead inspector also met with a Compass regional manager and spoke to commissioning officers from Essex and Southend-on-Sea local authorities via telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, communication and language, art, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They looked at curriculum plans and examples of pupils' work.

- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of pre-appointment checks, looked at safeguarding records and spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors had a tour the premises to review the suitability of the school building and outdoor area.
- Inspectors considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also spoke with parents via telephone. There were no responses to Ofsted surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Liz Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michael Williams	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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