Inspection of Compass Community School Coastal Park

18 Wiltie Gardens, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AX

Inspection dates:	23 to 25 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
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 feel a true sense of belonging in this caring and ambitious school. Relationships between staff and pupils are supportive and nurturing from the moment pupils join. Aspirations and expectations are high for all. As a result of the compassionate help of expert staff, pupils behave well and the school is calm, welcoming and safe.

Pupils achieve well, working hard to learn and thrive across the school's broad and ambitious curriculum. Despite often arriving with significant gaps in learning and low attendance in previous schools, pupils go on to study a range of qualifications to prepare them for their future steps. Some pupils achieve great success with accreditations, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Personal development is excellent. The school finds the best in everyone. Pupils are proud to apply for 'jobs' and fulfil them with diligence and pride. Opportunities to develop talents are wide ranging, from music to sport. The school prioritises mental health and well-being highly. The school enriches pupils' cultural and global awareness with engaging trips and visitors. Highlights include a refugee who helped pupils to understand crucial world issues. Another memorable visitor taught pupils how to speak Japanese before they created Japanese artwork and food.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has developed reading provision well. Knowledgeable staff teach pupils the sounds they need to access well-matched books for essential practice. As they move through the school, pupils develop fluency, confidence and expression in their reading. Some pupils are reluctant to read, but many develop a strong love for reading, enjoying challenging books which excite and interest them.

Pupils achieve well across the school's well-designed curriculum. Staff check pupils' knowledge, skills and development frequently. Teachers use this information to adapt lessons and to keep parents and carers well informed about their children's learning. Work in books often shows pride, care and understanding. Teachers and staff use regular reminders to help pupils to recall knowledge long term. Pupils learn essential mathematics skills well, which they apply to solve problems. Pupils' work in other subjects, such as science and music, demonstrates that pupils learn key content securely over time.

Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge. The school prioritises staff development to ensure that teaching and learning are always improving. Regular training helps teachers and support staff to adapt learning effectively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Occasionally, learning activities do not match what pupils can do. Pupils can sometimes require swifter help from adults to ensure that lesson tasks successfully fulfil the aims of the curriculum.

Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. If pupils make mistakes, they learn to rectify them. Staff show patience and forgiveness to help pupils work through their feelings to get back to work with a positive mindset. Breaktimes are happy and active, with pupils enjoying sports, such as football, cricket and basketball. Staff are keen to support and join in, which pupils appreciate.

Attendance has improved for many pupils who were persistently absent from other schools before they joined. The school has achieved tangible success to improve attendance for many pupils. Some have missed extended periods of education before joining this school. They now arrive on time, warmly greeted by caring staff for a healthy breakfast and a positive start to the day.

The school's personal development offer is outstanding. The school has designed its provision and assembly programme to prepare pupils strongly for modern Britain. Pupils understand healthy relationships, develop social awareness and celebrate multiculturalism. The school's '50 things to do during my time at Coastal Park' ensures a rich set of life experiences for all. Pupils thrive with an impressive array of trips from sites of historical interest to local sporting events. The school works tirelessly to promote pupils' character development. Pupils learn how to manage emotions as they build resilience and aspirations for the future.

The school strengthens careers advice with a careers fair and visits from professionals, such as paramedics, dentists, the fire service and a barber. Pupils study life skills, including cooking and cleaning, to help prepare them for future life and adulthood. Pupils succeed with a range of pathways into further study, training, and opportunities in industries, such as farming and building.

Leaders are compassionate, dedicated and effective. The school's vision is to be highly inclusive, never giving up on pupils. The school fulfils this aspiration through strong and shared values across both sites of the school. Staff feel highly supported. Morale is buoyant and workload is well managed.

The proprietor body and governors hold the school to account with expertise and diligence. The school fulfils schedule 10 of the Equality Act 210 with robust work to promote diversity and equity across school life. The proprietor uses strong oversight to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards consistently. The school maintains buildings, outdoor spaces and resources well. This enables pupils to learn and grow in a safe, secure and accessible environment. Leaders at all levels provide support and challenge to ensure constant evaluation and improvement. Pupils are always at the heart of everything in this friendly, nurturing and successful school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Occasionally, some learning activities are not well matched to what pupils can do. This can sometimes prevent pupils from achieving as highly as they could. The school should ensure that teachers adapt support in the moment to ensure that pupils access tasks to give them the precise help they need.

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	135510
DfE registration number	886/6126
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10391745
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Proprietor	Compass Community Schools Limited
Chair of proprietor body	Stacy Wallace
Chair of governors	Kate East
Headteacher	Julie Lumley
Annual fees (day pupils)	£75,764
Telephone number	013 0376 7801
Website	www.compass-schools.org
Email address	coastal.park@compass-schools.org
Date of previous inspection	1 to 3 November 2022

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan. Pupils usually join with significant gaps in attendance and previous learning. Many have suffered traumatic experiences, and older pupils have usually faced multiple previous school moves.
- Pupils join the school from five different local authorities.
- There have been significant changes to leadership since the last inspection, including the recent appointments of the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is based across two sites. The main site is 18 Wiltie Gardens, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AX. The second site is 66 Earls Avenue, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2HA.

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 evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator teachers and support staff, proprietor, members of the proprietor body and chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, music, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 complies with the independent school standards. These included a check on the school premises and scrutiny of school policies.

- Inspectors considered responses to the staff surveys as well as responses to Ofsted's Parent View and free-text responses.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority and considered a range of correspondence from virtual schools.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Cattell	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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M1 2WD

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