

Gretton School

Manor Farm Road, Girton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB3 0RX

Inspection date

22 March 2023

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 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- The school's safeguarding policy is available on its website. It shows due regard for current statutory guidance and meets current requirements.
- Staff are given regular safeguarding training. When new staff join the school, safeguarding is a key part of the induction process. As a result, staff know the school's processes and expectations around safeguarding well. They are alert to the possibility of abuse and neglect. They report any concerns about pupils promptly.
- The school's designated safeguarding leads are well trained for the role. They take prompt and appropriate action in response to the concerns raised by staff. The designated safeguarding leads see themselves as pupils' advocates and 'fight their corner' whenever necessary.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

Paragraph 11

- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable health and safety policy is in place, covering current laws and regulations in this area.
- Leaders have put systems in place to ensure that checks are done in a timely fashion and nothing is missed. These systems work well and all the necessary checks are up to date.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

Paragraph 12

- The proprietor has ensured that appropriate and up-to-date fire risk assessments are in place for both of the school's sites. These were carried out by a specialist company and cover all relevant aspects of fire safety.

- The fire risk assessment for The Rectory site raised a concern about safe evacuation from the second floor. The proprietor commissioned a professional company to carry out a fire safety study into this issue. The study concluded that the single staircase from the second floor is suitable, subject to a maximum occupancy of 60 people. The proprietor has ensured that this is adhered to; typically, fewer than half of the maximum number of people use the second floor at any one time.
- Leaders have ensured that suitable checks are carried out regularly to ensure that the site is safe. The fire alarm, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting have all been professionally serviced within the past year.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are taught in small classes of seven or fewer throughout the school. The ratio of staff to pupils is high. For example, on the Manor Farm site all classes are taught by a teacher, supported by one or more teaching assistants.
- Leaders have thought carefully about how the proposed arrangements for admitting additional pupils to the school will be managed. They intend to increase the number of classes from two to three in most year groups. Leaders have strengthened leadership capacity in anticipation of the small increase in the number of pupils in each key stage.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

Paragraph 16

- The proprietor has ensured that an appropriate risk assessment policy is in place. There are clear and well-established systems for managing risk. Risk assessments are carried out, as necessary, for all aspects of the school's work.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

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

Paragraph 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21

- Leaders have ensured that there is a robust approach to the safer recruitment of staff. All the necessary checks are carried out before staff are allowed to start work at the school. These are recorded fully in the school's single central record of pre-appointment checks.
- The single central record is well maintained and up to date. It includes all the necessary information for all the staff, members of the proprietor body and other relevant adults connected with the school.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29

- The school operates on two sites which are a short walk apart. Pupils in key stage 2 and key stage 3 are based on the Manor Farms site. Pupils in key stage 4 and key stage 5, as well as students in the sixth form, are based at The Rectory.
- Both sites are well cared for and well maintained. The Manor Farm site has been extended to provide additional classrooms, as well as improved administrative and reception facilities. There is sufficient space to accommodate the proposed increase in pupils.
- The Manor Farm site has extensive, well-maintained grounds. There are lots of places for pupils to use at breaktimes, including areas with fixed play equipment. There is also lots of space for physical education lessons to take place. The Rectory has a large garden, with spaces for pupils to play and relax.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The headteacher and directors know the independent school standards well. They check regularly that the standards are being met consistently and in full. Systems about ensuring compliance with legal requirements are effective and well established. Leaders and directors are currently working on further strengthening these systems.
- The headteacher and directors have a clear vision for the school. They are ambitious for pupils and determined to ensure high-quality provision. They have thought carefully about how this will be maintained if the number of pupils increases.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and is likely to remain met if the material change is approved.

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 | 136047 |
| DfE registration number | 873/6048 |
| Inspection number | 10282122 |

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 residential special school |
| Proprietor | Cavendish Learning Limited |
| Chair | Aatif Hassan |
| Headteacher | Mrs Beth Elkins |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £57,500 to £59,500 |
| Telephone number | 01223 277438 |
| Website | www.grettonschool.com |
| Email address | info@grettonschool.com |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 14–16 January 2020 |

Pupils

| | School's current position | School's proposal | Inspector's recommendation |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 19 | no change | no change |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 119 | 200 | 200 |

Information about this school

- The school operates on two sites, which are a short walk apart. Pupils in key stage 2 and key stage 3 are based on the Manor Farm site. Pupils in key stage 4 and key stage 5, as well as students in the sixth form, are based at: The Rectory, 65 High Street, Girton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB3 0QD.

- The current headteacher took up her post in January 2021. The previous headteacher is now executive principal of the four schools, known as The Newcome Group, that this school is part of.
- The school does not have a governing body. Governance is provided by the directors of the proprietor body.
- The school is registered for pupils from the age of five years. However, the school currently has no pupils in key stage 1 and this has been the case for some years.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan for autism spectrum disorder. Pupils are 'high functioning' and do not have additional learning disabilities.
- Pupils are placed at the school by the local authority in which they live. Pupils currently come from 15 different local authorities.
- Full standard inspections were carried out in February 2017, January 2020 and November 2013. The overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good on each occasion.
- A full standard inspection was carried out in October 2010, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory. A subsequent progress monitoring inspection took place in July 2011.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) in response to a request from the proprietor for a material change to be considered. The change applies to the educational provision only.
- The school is currently registered for up to 150 pupils. The proprietor has requested that the DfE increase its capacity to 200 pupils. This is the first time that the proprietor has requested this change.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, representatives of the proprietor body, other leaders and a group of pupils. The inspector checked the school's single central record of pre-appointment checks. The inspector visited lessons and checked the premises on both sites. The inspector scrutinised a range of documents concerning safeguarding, health and safety and fire safety.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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