

Pear Tree School

Pear Tree House, Fromes Hill, Ledbury, HR8 1HT

Inspection dates

24 July 2019

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(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), (3(f), 3(g), 4

- The school's curriculum vision is to provide pupils with a rigorous, academic, practical, intellectual education which will challenge and engage them in the context of their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In line with pupils attending other schools in this group, those attending Pear Tree School are likely to have had a very disrupted education experience. It is anticipated that they may arrive throughout the academic year and that they are unlikely to stay in the school for more than two years. As such, leaders have developed a two-year curriculum to ensure that pupils arriving at any time during the year can access suitable learning that will both challenge and support progress towards the next steps in their lives and education.
- The school's curriculum policy is underpinned by appropriate schemes of work which cover linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. In addition, there is a planned programme of personal, social and emotional education that encourages pupils to respect themselves and to respect others regardless of difference. This sits alongside the therapeutic approach to teaching required by these children. With careful planning and effective teaching, these plans should ensure that the ages, needs and aptitudes of all pupils are taken into account and that they are all able to acquire new knowledge and make good progress.
- Many pupils will have education, health and care plans (EHCP) and the school intends to put individual learning plans in place for each child, informed by their EHCP targets where applicable, as well as by initial assessments carried out when pupils arrive. The school's assessment policy provides for both formative and summative assessment throughout the year. Staff will make termly progress and attainment checks and share these with those who have parental responsibility for the pupils.

Paragraph 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)

- Based on the Gatsby Benchmarks, leaders have planned a comprehensive careers programme for pupils in Year 8 through to Year 11. This offers a combination of one-to-one taught sessions, visits to colleges, universities and training providers and

visiting speakers from a wide range of occupational areas. The parent company also has strong links with the National Apprenticeship Service and the National Careers Guidance Service, which are to be utilised to provide additional opportunities for pupils.

Paragraph 2(1)(b)(ii), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j)

- The school's plans and schemes of work do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- The school has a comprehensive, rewards-led behaviour policy. The policy sets out the steps to be taken to prevent poor behaviour as well as those to tackle such behaviour. It also describes the ways in which pupils will be supported to take responsibility for their own actions. A 'no exclusions rule' has been included.
- The standards in Part 1 are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- Pupils attending Pear Tree School are likely to have experienced disrupted education and home life, resulting in issues with self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others. As a result, leaders have developed a programme of therapy and educational support that focuses on building these key aspects of pupils' social, moral and emotional development.
- The school's policy for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, establishes how and when these aspects of pupils' personal development will be taught and developed over time. Leaders have identified a range of formal and informal activities to take place across the academic curriculum, as well as through the extended curriculum. It is envisaged that these will include assemblies, community projects, educational visits and visitors, personal, social and health education sessions, diversity celebrations and using public services.
- The standards in Part 2 are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school's arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are in line with statutory guidance as set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' September 2018. The executive headteacher is aware of the changes for September 2019 and has set up training for staff who will be working at Pear Tree School, during their first four days of employment. The new lead teacher for Pear Tree School is to be the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and has already received training for the role.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 14

- The school's policies for behaviour and anti-bullying set out the expectations of both pupils and staff. Policies recognise that pupils attending Pear Tree may exhibit challenging behaviours, including bullying, but provide clear systems and strategies to deal with any issues. If these strategies are implemented effectively they are likely to

promote good behaviour and ensure that bullying is prevented as far as is reasonably practicable.

Paragraph 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- Leaders have drawn up a comprehensive written health and safety policy which establishes lines of accountability. If implemented fully, it should ensure that the school meets all regulations.
- The school has very recently had a full fire safety and compliance check. The report shows that the premises comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- An appropriate first aid policy is in place for the school. If put into practice effectively, first aid should be delivered in a timely and competent manner.
- The proprietor and the executive headteacher are very aware that the needs of pupils likely to attend Pear Tree School are such that they will require high levels of supervision. There are plans to ensure that there will always be a ratio of at least one member of staff to two pupils.
- Although no pupils are yet on roll at Pear Tree School, the proprietor has ensured that an admissions register is in place which is able to record all the required information.
- Leaders have drawn up a written risk assessment policy to safeguard the welfare of pupils at the school. The executive headteacher was able to provide a very recent example of a risk assessment for planned off-site physical education, which demonstrated effective implementation of the policy.
- The standards in Part 3 are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(1)–18(2)(f), 18(3), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a)–21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b)

- At the time of this pre-registration inspection, none of the appointments to Pear Tree School had been confirmed. This was because the proprietor was awaiting the outcome of the appropriate pre-employment checks. However, conversation with the proprietor, the executive headteacher and the chair of governors confirmed a comprehensive understanding of safer recruitment.
- The proprietor has drawn up a single central record for Pear Tree School which has the facility to record all appropriate pre-employment checks in line with safer recruitment practices. Checks made on governors are already recorded on this document.

Paragraph 19, 19(1), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i)–19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii)

- The school does not intend to use supply staff.
- The standards in Part 4 are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- Leaders have ensured that there are separate toilets for staff and pupils, all of whom

will be male. Pupils' toilets are available on the ground floor and the first floor of the building and are intended for use by one pupil at a time. Doors are lockable on the inside. Both facilities have adequate cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water at suitable temperatures.

- Labelled drinking water is available in the kitchen area, which is accessible to pupils.

Paragraph 23(1)(c), 27, 27(a), 27(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- Pupils are to have access to a pleasant outside space where they can play or socialise.
- Leaders have taken the decision to use a local sports centre, where suitable changing facilities and showers are available, for physical education activities.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2)

- The school has suitable accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils. The accommodation has been carefully sited at one end of the staff room to enable close supervision of any pupil needing to use the accommodation.

Paragraph 25

- The premises have been very recently converted from a residential building and work has been completed to a high standard. The health and safety policy and the building maintenance plan show that regular checks for potential safety concerns are planned and procedures are in place for reporting any problems that may arise.
- The standards in Part 5 are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(e), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g)

- The school does not have a website. Most pupils will be placed at Pear Tree School by local authorities. Therefore, the proprietor has created an information 'pack' which will be given to those with parental responsibility when pupils start at the school. This will include the safeguarding policy.
- The standards in Part 6 are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)

- The proprietor has drawn up a written complaints procedure policy which is to be made available to those with parental responsibility. It sets out clear timescales for the management of a complaint and allows a complaint to be considered informally initially.
- The policy explains the procedure to be followed when a parent or carer is not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint. This includes the formation of a panel to consider the complaint formally. It is intended that this panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters involved in the complaint, one of whom will independent of the school.
- The school's policy also explains how records of all complaints will kept confidential, other than where requested by the Secretary of State or by an inspection body.

- The standards in Part 7 are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor, executive headteacher and the chair of governors have a comprehensive understanding of the independent school standards. They have used their experience of running two other successful independent schools, catering for similar pupils, to ensure that these standards are likely to be met. They intend to bring effective procedures from these established schools and adapt them to meet the needs of the new school and its potential pupils.
- The standards in Part 8 are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has drawn up an appropriate policy setting out how the school will ensure that all pupils will have equal access to the curriculum and to physical spaces. Both floors of the premises provide access to the necessary facilities. The outside space is level and accessible through several exits, including double doors that would allow a wheelchair to pass.
- It is likely that the school will meet the requirements of paragraph 3 schedule 10 of the Equalities Act 2010 when it opens.

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	147220
DfE registration number	884/6018
Inspection number	10113456

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Bernadine Gibson
Chair	Kate East
Headteacher	Rebecca Slayford
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,200
Telephone number	07753 584581
Email address	rebecca.slayford@compasscommunity.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	N/A
Number of pupils of compulsory school age for whom a statement is maintained under section 324, or who is looked after by a local authority	N/A
Total hours operating as a school per week	N/A
Total hours of teaching provided per week	N/A

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	0	11–17	11–17
Number of pupils on the school roll	0	8	8

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	N/A	Boys
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	N/A	8
Number of part-time pupils	N/A	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	N/A	8
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	N/A	8
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority an education, health and care plan	N/A	8

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	N/A	3
Number of part-time teaching staff	N/A	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	N/A

Information about this proposed school

- Pear Tree School is part of the Compass Community Ltd group. It is proposed that the school will operate from Pear Tree House, Fromes Hill, Ledbury HR8 1HT. The school intends to open in September 2019.
- The school is to cater for up to eight boys between the ages of 11 and 17 who have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties. All pupils will be referred by local authorities and most will be under a care order.
- It is expected that pupils may arrive at any time during an academic year and are likely to stay at the school for up to two years.
- During their time at the school, pupils will access a broad and balanced curriculum alongside therapeutic support to help them to address their behaviours.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in order to assess the school's readiness to open.
- The inspector held discussions with the proprietor, the executive headteacher and the chair of governors. The inspector also examined the school's application and reviewed a wide range of documentation provided by the prospective school. This included policies, schemes of work, sample assessment records, timetables, registers and records of employment checks. The inspector also undertook a tour of the premises to check its suitability as a school.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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