

# Life Skills Manor

Baypoint Club, Ramsgate Road CT13 9QL

**Inspection date**

19 December 2022

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 2(1)(a)–2(1)(g), 2A, 3–4*

- Leaders have written a clear and well-thought-out curriculum policy. It places appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills while also meeting their emotional and pastoral needs. Leaders have developed a suitably broad and balanced curriculum in all subjects. Students in the sixth form will study English, mathematics, science, art, computing, physical education and humanities.
- The curriculum sets out precisely what students in the sixth form will learn in each subject, supported by comprehensive schemes of work. Leaders aim for all pupils to leave school with a range of suitable academic and technical vocational qualifications. The curriculum in the sixth form includes the coursework elements required for specific academic qualifications, such as GCSE and functional skills. Leaders recognise the need to be flexible and responsive to students' individual needs when deciding what they will teach and how.
- The school's teaching and learning policy sets out clearly what is expected from teachers in relation to planning and delivering the curriculum effectively. There is a strong emphasis on enabling students in the sixth form to take greater ownership of their learning as well as developing their confidence and self-esteem. Through the 'life skills' curriculum students will learn important skills to help them towards preparation for adulthood.
- Experiences to prepare pupils for life beyond school are thoughtfully planned in the school's current approach to careers education, advice and guidance. Links to local businesses will provide opportunities for pupils to make choices about their futures and to develop an understanding about the world of work. Pupils will also participate in the Prince's Trust and Duke of Edinburgh's Award schemes.
- Physical education is taught on the school's extensive grounds and in the sports hall facilities.
- Well-qualified teachers will take up their posts in January 2023. They will oversee teaching and learning for pupils as they transition into the proposed new key stage.

Staff will assess students' learning continuously during lessons and will adjust teaching accordingly. The curriculum includes information for staff about how learning can be adapted to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are alert to pupils' individual education, health and care plans (EHC plan(s)) and targets.

- The school's well-established personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme has been extended to provide suitable content for the additional phase. It includes a range of topics, such as how to manage complex emotions, sexual orientation, financial management and independence, and healthy relationships. Relationships education forms an integral part of the PSHE curriculum. Safety issues, such as how to use the internet safely, are taught throughout the curriculum.
- Leaders have systems in place to assess the progress that pupils make both academically and in relation to their social and emotional needs. This includes ongoing assessments which will be used to inform teaching as well as summative assessments. Leaders intend to use information about pupils to support governors' knowledge of the school's work.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material changes are applied.

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

### *Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)*

- The proprietor, the headteacher and the chair of the governing body articulate a clear sense of the ethos of the school. Building positive trusting relationships which develop pupils' confidence are very much part of the school's 'life skills' and PSHE curriculum. Leaders are keen to enable pupils to thrive by promoting self-discipline, self-esteem and resilience.
- Leaders see pupils' emotional and social development as an essential component to enable successful academic learning. They are experienced in working with pupils who have complex social, emotional and mental health needs as well as autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- To support pupils' personal development, there is a focus on helping them to recognise and understand their feelings. Staff work with the therapeutic team to enable pupils to develop positive strategies to manage their emotions. Most pupils have a history of missing out on many experiences, either because of previous school exclusions or due to their own stress and anxieties. Part of leaders' vision is their strong determination to remove such barriers. They provide a range of trips, visitors, activities and experiences to help to build pupils' confidence.
- Leaders and staff promote effectively pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the taught curriculum and through establishing a strong ethos of tolerance and respect between staff and pupils. Pupils learn about world cultures, faiths and traditions.
- The promotion of British values is embedded through the school's work and ethos. These principles are also taught directly, for example through the PSHE programme.

Pupils have regular opportunities to debate and discuss a broad range of themes and topics, including current news.

- The understanding and embodiment of 'life skills' sits at the heart of the school's ethos. For example, there are wide opportunities planned for pupils to work in different groups and environments, such as the school allotment, the forest school provision, or the food technology facilities.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material changes are applied.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### Paragraph 7–7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16 –16(b)

- Leaders recognise and make sure that the safeguarding policy is updated regularly to ensure that it accurately reflects the school's intended practice and latest statutory guidance.
- The headteacher and three members of staff have completed training as designated safeguarding leaders. All new staff are due to complete training in safeguarding, including specific training in the Prevent duty, online safety and on female genital mutilation.
- Leaders speak confidently about the challenges of safeguarding pupils with SEND. They are currently in the process of transferring safeguarding records to a new secure centralised system. Leaders know that the new system should include clear and detailed information about actions taken to secure pupils' welfare and safety.
- Leaders understand local arrangements with agencies to support working together to safeguard pupils.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online and in the local areas.
- Leaders have an effective health and safety policy in place. There are written procedures in place to ensure that appropriate checks on the premises and equipment comply with requirements.
- The proprietor has systems and procedures in place to ensure that the school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Leaders ensure that all fire checks are routinely undertaken to maintain equipment. Regular fire drills take place to ensure that everyone knows the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.
- The school has sufficient staff in place to ensure that pupils are well supervised at all times.
- Leaders have ensured that the written risk assessments and related policy are fit for purpose and appropriately reflect legislation. There are appropriate plans in place to provide bespoke risk assessments for each pupil. Staff monitor risk assessments closely and amend them as required. This ensures that risk assessments remain fit for purpose.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part of the standards if the material change is agreed.

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

*Paragraph 18(2)(a)–18(2)(f), 19(2)(a)–19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(8)*

- The single central record meets statutory requirements. The headteacher has appointed new teachers and support staff for the proposed sixth form. Appropriate recruitment and suitability checks have been completed for all staff and members of the governing body.
- Leaders have completed suitable training in safer recruitment procedures.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part of the standards if the material change is agreed.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 22–24(1)(b), 24(2), 25–29(1)(b)*

- The school occupies a former sports and social club building. It is accessed through its own secure entrance. The newly installed purpose-built modular school office and additional classrooms are located within the secure area of the existing building.
- Teaching spaces and communal spaces are suitably decorated and furnished. The new classrooms are well ventilated, bright and light, with views over expansive playing fields. The number and the size of rooms ready for use are suitable for up to 50 pupils, including in the sixth form.
- The school has appropriate toilet facilities with hot and cold running water. The temperature of the hot water does not pose a scalding risk. Drinking water is readily available and is labelled as such.
- Showers and changing facilities are provided within the sports complex and are available for pupils' sole use at certain times.
- The medical room is fit for purpose, with hand-washing facilities and a toilet close by.
- The outside space available to pupils is large. The area has boundary fencing. There is also a multi-sports court, where pupils spend their breaktimes. Pupils also access the allotment and forest school facilities on the school grounds.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part of the standards if the material change is agreed.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has experience of running an independent special school. Leaders have drawn on this experience to identify effectively what needs to be done and how to ensure that pupils are successful in aspects of school life. They have a secure understanding of the independent school standards.
- The proprietor and headteacher have knowledge and experience of meeting pupils' academic needs as well as their special educational needs. They have drawn on this experience to create plans for the curriculum with a suitable balance of academic, technical and vocational provision.

- Leaders place strong emphasis on developing pupils' confidence, self-worth and independence in readiness for college, apprenticeships or work. This is reflected in the school's aims and vision as well as in the curriculum they have planned for the proposed new stage.
- Leaders understand their responsibility to ensure that all staff work to keep pupils safe.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part of the standards if the material change is agreed.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has designed an appropriate accessibility plan, which is available on the school's website.

## **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	148860
DfE registration number	886/6168
Inspection number	10266042

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	Independent
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Life Skills Manor Ltd
Chair	Roger Silk
Headteacher	Mr Paul Barrett
Annual fees (day pupils)	£54,000
Telephone number	01304747464
Website	<a href="http://www.lifeskillsmanor.co.uk">www.lifeskillsmanor.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:paul@lifeskillsmanor.co.uk">paul@lifeskillsmanor.co.uk</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	5 to 7 July 2022

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	10 to 16	10 to 18	10 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	22	50	50

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	22	50
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	22	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	22	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	22	50

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	3	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	8	14

## Information about this school

- Life Skills Manor for Autism currently provides full-time education for pupils aged 10 to 16 who have a diagnosis of ASD.
- Pupils are placed in the school by Kent County Council.
- The school will have a focus on developing pupils 'life skills'. The life skills curriculum will sit alongside traditional curriculum content.
- The school has a proprietor and governing body. The governing body was established in September 2022.
- The school occupies part of a sports and social club premises, known as Bay Point. The premises are located between Sandwich and Ramsgate CT13 9QL.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.



## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE in response to the proprietor's request to increase the number of pupils from 22 to 50 and expand the age range (currently 10 to 16 years) to take pupils from 10 to 18 years old.
- The inspector toured the school site with the proprietor and met some school staff, including the headteacher. She also met with the chair of the governing body and the proprietor. The inspector reviewed a range of relevant documents provided by leaders and from the school's website.

## Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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