



Material Change Inspection Report

Pivot Academy Kirklees

January 2024

School's details

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| School | Pivot Academy Kirklees |
| DfE number | 382/6008 |
| Address | Pivot Academy Kirklees Technology House Alexandra Court Dyson Wood Way Bradley Business Park Bradley West Yorkshire HD2 1GN |
| Telephone number | 01274 456350 |
| Email address | emily.alexander@pivot-group.co.uk |
| Headteacher | Mrs Emily Alexander |
| Chair of proprietors | Mr Michael Smith |
| Proprietor | Pivot Educational Consultancy Limited |
| Age range | 11 to 16 |
| Number of pupils on roll | 65 |
| Date of inspection | 10 January 2024 |

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Pivot Academy Kirklees is an independent, co-educational day school for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, the large majority of whom have associated special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A small minority of pupils have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion from other schools. Many pupils who join the school have previously demonstrated poor attendance and experienced significant disruption to their education. All pupil places are commissioned and funded by one of five local authorities. Forty-nine pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language for eight pupils. The chief executive officer of Pivot Educational Consultancy Limited is also the chair of proprietors and, together with the directors of the company, oversees the management of the school. The school is currently located on three sites which are close to each other. The school appointed a new headteacher in January 2024. The school's previous inspection was a non-routine inspection in September 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to change the age range of pupils and admit pupils from the age of 7, starting with pupils in Years 3 to 6 from September 2024. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

| Regulations which were the focus of the inspection | Team judgements |
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| Part 1, paragraphs 2 to 4 (curriculum, relationships and sex education, teaching and assessment) | Met |
| Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding) | Met |
| Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information) | Met |
| Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management) | Met |

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum, relationships and sex education (RSE), teaching and assessment [ISSR Part 1, paragraphs 2 to 4]

- 2.1 The school meets the standards.
- 2.2 The curriculum is suitably documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. It is implemented effectively. These include an appropriate proposed curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 entering the school in September 2024. This relates effectively to provision for pupils, particularly those with SEND, in the local authorities from which pupils come. The curriculum is linked appropriately to individual EHC plans to ensure pupils' individual needs are met.
- 2.3 The school provides appropriate personal, social, health and economic education and has suitable plans for pupils aged 7 to 11. Suitable RSE provision is made for pupils of aged 11 to 16 currently in the school. This is in line with statutory requirements. The statement of the school's provision is published appropriately. Suitable plans are in place to implement an appropriately planned relationships education programme for pupils aged 7 to 11.
- 2.4 Teaching enables pupils to make good progress. It encompasses effective behaviour management, including in relation to pupils' SEMH needs. It is supported by suitable resources and these are appropriately planned for younger pupils. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the provision of staff experienced in teaching younger pupils, including transfer of current staff across from partnership Pivot group schools. Staff are aware of the different needs of individual pupils whose learning needs may be at a different level to those expected for their age. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place. This relates effectively to pupils' individual EHC plans and takes into account any absences when specific topics have been taught.
- 2.5 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements when the age range for pupils is widened to include pupils potentially from the age of 7.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 The school's principles and values are actively promoted through implementation of the school's vision 'Because Children Deserve Better'. This includes the promotion of curiosity, creativity and collaboration, alongside a focus on mental health and wellbeing which is intrinsic to the school's ethos. This provision facilitates effectively the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Lessons provide for a strong focus on British values throughout the school. They encourage successfully respect, tolerance and empathy towards the needs of others, including those with protected characteristics. This was evident in positive interactions observed between pupils and between staff and pupils. During discussion, pupils articulated the view that rules are necessary to ensure equality and fairness within society. Pupils' effective understanding of different cultures and the needs of a diverse world is engendered through a range of themed opportunities to explore sustainability and the cost of living across the diverse school community. Pupils develop age-appropriate democratic knowledge through classroom debates. Suitable plans are in place to include age appropriate, core themes in the proposed curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 entering the school in September 2024.
- 2.8 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements when the age range for pupils is widened to include pupils potentially from the age of 7.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.9 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.10 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 Scrutiny of records, observation and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that appropriate safeguards are implemented effectively. Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school. They are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. Safeguarding, pastoral and healthcare staff share key information regularly and effectively. They take into account each individual pupil's physical and psychological needs and wishes, particularly for pupils who have SEND. This information is used to agree appropriate action including the drawing up and implementation of individual risk assessments and support plans. Those responsible for safeguarding have considered the safeguarding needs of younger pupils effectively and staff have received focused training in this area. There is effective liaison with external agencies, including referral to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. Training for other staff and for the directors is conducted regularly as required. It is effective and includes informal updates.
- 2.13 Staff are knowledgeable about changes in recent legislation, including the management of children's mental wellbeing, contextual safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence. They understand the principles underpinning the staff code of conduct and the procedures for making a referral, including the importance of low-level reporting. They are confident about using whistleblowing procedures. Interviews with staff confirmed that training is thorough and safeguarding is managed effectively. Senior leaders take appropriate action if any perceived breach of the staff code of conduct occurs or an allegation is received with regard to an adult who works with children. They understand their responsibility to make referral to relevant statutory bodies once investigations by external agencies are completed.
- 2.14 The director responsible for safeguarding meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies. This maintains effective oversight of safeguarding policies and their implementation in the school. These include appropriate staff recruitment policies. Reports are given regularly to the directors by the DSL. These highlight appropriate details of any safeguarding incidents which occur, including during trips and outside of school. This ensures that the directors have an appropriate level of understanding, scrutiny and oversight. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken.
- 2.15 Pupils stated confidently that they know how to stay safe, including online. They confirmed that they can talk to staff if they are worried or concerned. Any concerns raised are monitored and acted upon by the DSL. Records confirm that when pupils raise a concern, they receive a timely response and action is taken where needed. Monitoring and filtering of technology are effective.
- 2.16 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements when the age range for pupils is lowered to include pupils potentially from the age of 7.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.17 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.18 The school meets the standard.
- 2.19 Directors and senior leaders have planned effectively for the proposed change in the age range of pupils. They have drawn effectively on the expertise and resources of their Pivot group partnership school relating to provision for pupils aged 7 to 11.
- 2.20 Senior leaders and directors, including those with specific responsibilities for safeguarding, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all the other standards are met consistently, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the request to a change in age range to admit pupils from the age of 7 is granted.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with a group of directors. They visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.