Holme Court School

Cherry Hinton Hall, Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, Cambridge CB1 8DW

Unique reference number (URN): 108886

Material change inspection report:	10 June 2026

Overall outcome	The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE), which is the registration authority for independent schools. The school has applied to the DfE to make a material change to its registration. The school proposes to change the maximum number of pupils attending.

The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

When we carry out material change inspections of independent schools, we report on the school's likely compliance with part 8 of the independent school standards first. Under part 8, the proprietor is required to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards consistently. The standard in part 8 is intended to ensure that the quality of leadership and management at the school is sufficient for that purpose.

Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils they serve and the implications of the proposed material change. They have carefully considered both the increase in pupil numbers and the broader range of needs that the school intends to support. Leaders have established a robust admissions process. This helps to ensure that placements are appropriate and that the school can meet pupils' needs successfully. They are clear about the limits of the provision and the needs for which the school is best equipped.

Plans for growth are detailed and realistic. Leaders have developed a phased implementation plan that includes additional staffing, leadership capacity and accommodation. For example, plans include the appointment of additional senior leaders as pupil numbers increase. Leaders intend that growth will be gradual and subject to regular review. This helps to ensure that quality of education, care and support remains sufficient as the school develops.

Leaders possess considerable expertise in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils with autism, social anxiety and mental health needs. They work closely with families, local authorities and other professional to ensure that placements are suitable and that pupils receive appropriate support. The proprietor and school leaders maintain effective oversight of the school's work and compliance with the independent school standards. This is enacted through regular compliance audits, written reports and reviews of safeguarding, premises and educational provision.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Safeguarding

Leaders are powerful advocates of pupils' safety, wellbeing and welfare. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates, including training that helps them recognise and respond to mental health concerns. Leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are reviewed regularly. Staff know pupils well and are alert to changes in pupils' presentation and wellbeing Leaders act swiftly when concerns arise and work effectively with a range of external agencies. The school gives a high priority to teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Appropriate arrangements are in place for record-keeping and safeguarding oversight. There is a suitable safeguarding policy in place.

The standards in this part were met at the previous inspection and are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

Health and safety, fire, supervision of pupils and risk assessment

Leaders ensure that effective arrangements are in place to promote pupils' health, safety and welfare. Regular checks and maintenance help to ensure that the premises remain safe and well maintained. Leaders maintain comprehensive records relating to health and safety, fire safety and premises management. These are reviewed regularly and show that leaders take a systematic approach to identifying and addressing risks. The school works closely with the proprietor's estates team to ensure that the premises are maintained effectively and that plans for increased pupil numbers are carefully considered. Leaders implement a suitable risk assessment policy. They identify and manage risks thoughtfully, including when planning off-site activities and visits.

Arrangements for fire safety are secure. Fire exits are clearly marked, and evacuation procedures are well established. Leaders ensure that staffing arrangements provide appropriate supervision and support for pupils. This includes additional adult support where this is required to meet pupils' additional needs and when pupils are off site. Plans associated with the proposed increase in pupil numbers include appropriate consideration of staffing levels and supervision. Suitable first-aid arrangements are in place, including trained staff and a suitable medical room. Staff understand pupils' individual needs and respond appropriately when support is required.

The standards in this part were met at the previous inspection and are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

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

The recruitment checks made on staff, supply staff and the proprietor; the single central record of these recruitment checks

Leaders implement robust recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Leaders involved with recruitment are appropriately trained in safer recruitment practices. Recruitment processes include a range of checks and interview activities designed to assess candidates' suitability for their roles. Leaders complete the required pre-employment checks before staff begin work. The single central record is comprehensive, accurate and regularly reviewed. It includes the required statutory information for staff, governors and the proprietor. Leaders use supply staff infrequently. When agency staff are employed, leaders obtain appropriate assurances.

The standards in this part were met at the previous inspection and are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Toilet and washing facilities, water supply, changing accommodation, showers, medical room and accommodation for pupils' therapy needs

The school provides suitable toilet and washing facilities for pupils and staff. These are clean, well maintained and sufficient for the number of pupils on roll and the proposed increase in pupil numbers. Drinking water is readily available and clearly signposted. Suitable changing and shower facilities are available where required. The medical room provides an appropriate space for pupils who are unwell or injured. It is suitably equipped, well maintained and contains secure storage for

medical supplies. Leaders have considered the implications of increased pupil numbers and have ensured that facilities will be sufficient for pupils' needs.

Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils, lighting and acoustic conditions and outdoor space

The school shares a site with a nursery and another school under the same proprietor ownership. Six classrooms are currently in use by Holme Court, and the school proposes to use another 3 classrooms to cater for up to 6 pupils in each classroom. Other classrooms provide specialist teaching, such as for food technology and science. Leaders have also considered how to use additional space for interventions and therapy.

The premises are well maintained and suitable for their intended use. Classrooms, specialist teaching spaces and communal areas provide an appropriate environment for learning and support. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to ensure that alterations to room usage are planned and implemented safely. The site is secure and access is controlled. Outdoor areas provide sufficient space for recreation and social interaction with suitable adult supervision. Leaders have given careful consideration to the impact of an increase in pupil numbers on circulation, supervision and access to facilities. Physical adaptations, including sound dampening measures, help to create an environment that supports pupils who benefit from lower-sensory settings.

The standards in this part were met at the previous inspection and are likely to be met should the DfE approve the implementation of the material changes.

The school's accessibility plan

There is a suitable accessibility plan that meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. Inspectors checked the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our updated inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

The inspector spoke with the chief operating officer, the headteacher, school leaders, the proprietor's head of special educational needs and/or disabilities provision and the chair of governors during the inspection.

The inspector checked the school's single central record of background checks for staff working at the school. The inspector also reviewed a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety, and staff training.

The school currently operates from Cherry Hinton Hall, Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, CB1 8DW. The inspector toured the site and premises where the provider intends to admit an additional 18 pupils.

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Lead inspector

Hannah Stoten	His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

Proprietor	Inspired Learning Group (UK) Ltd
Chair of the proprietor body	Ronell Selzer
Headteacher	Anita Laws
Type of school	Other independent special school
Capacity	55
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	43
Number of part-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	0
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Annual fees for day pupils	£18,780 to £20,904
Email address	admin@holmecourt.co.uk

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