

# Phoenix Bay School

The Pavillion, 3 Seale Hayne, Newton Abbot, Torquay TQ12 6NQ

**Inspection date**

1 October 2025

**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 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraphs 7 to 7(b) and 32(1)(c)*

- The school demonstrates a strong and embedded culture of safeguarding. Secure systems are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. These systems are underpinned by a clear safeguarding policy and effective procedures. Such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- The school provides staff with regular and up-to-date training in safeguarding matters. It places a sustained emphasis on this area of staff's professional knowledge. This enables staff to identify and respond to concerns about pupils' welfare promptly and appropriately.
- Staff know pupils well and are confident in reporting concerns. This contributes to a detailed and coherent safeguarding picture overseen by the designated safeguarding leader.
- Pupils know to speak to members of staff if they have any concerns.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12 and 14*

- The school has effective policies and procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff. Fire safety is well managed. The proprietor has ensured that fire safety signs, emergency exits and fire safety equipment are suitably located throughout the building. These are regularly checked to ensure they operate correctly.
- As pupil numbers have increased, the school has strategically recruited staff to meet the evolving needs of its pupils. This approach has enabled the school to build a staff team with a diverse range of expertise. This contributes effectively to the various roles and responsibilities across the school.
- The proprietor intends to adopt the same high staff-to-pupil ratios if pupil numbers grow beyond the current 24 the school is registered for. This ensures that pupils are properly supervised throughout the day.

#### *Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)*

- Leaders have conducted thorough risk assessments across the school site. These include the use of transport and arrangements for external visits. In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, individual safety plans are developed for each pupil. This ensures that their specific needs are met and any risks are mitigated effectively.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change requests are approved.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(3)(b) and 21(5) to 21(6)*

- The proprietor has ensured that all the required checks on staff working at the school have been completed before employment commences. This includes checks on the right to work in the United Kingdom.
- The proprietor ensures that when the school uses any supply agency staff the appropriate checks are completed.
- Members of the proprietor body and advisory board have had the statutory checks made to determine their suitability in their roles. This ensures that individuals are not prohibited from managing schools.
- The school maintains a well-organised electronic single central record. The chair of the advisory board regularly checks the school's single central record to ensure its accuracy and completeness.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change requests are approved.

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

*Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 24(1) to 24(1)(b), 24(2) and 25 to 29(1)(b)*

- The proprietor has recently expanded the school's teaching areas. This includes renovating the building known as the 'Pavilion' and the acquisition of additional premises on the same site, referred to as 'Big Red'. Both spaces have been appropriately refurbished to meet the needs of the pupils. 'Big Red' is used for teaching key stage 2 pupils, while older students are taught in the 'Pavilion'. The rooms have been thoughtfully decorated to support the sensory needs of pupils. Additional facilities include a new catering area and a hairdressing room, providing students with opportunities to develop practical skills as part of their preparation for future careers.
- Pupils arrive and depart by cars and minibuses. The car park on the site allows transport to drop off pupils safely. Staff meet and greet pupils to provide a smooth transition into classes.
- The school has suitable toilets and changing facilities. The school also has a dedicated medical room with a bed and appropriate first-aid equipment.
- Drinking water is available throughout the school. Hot water in washbasins does not pose a scalding risk.
- There is external lighting outside and internal emergency lighting.

- The site benefits from a variety of outside areas, which includes green areas for pupils to have first-hand experience of the natural environment.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change requests are approved.

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

##### *Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(c)*

- The proprietor, and senior staff, supported by the advisory board, hold a strong and clear vision for the school. The proprietor maintains strong oversight of the school's work. They are committed to providing a high quality of education and pastoral care to vulnerable pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the independent school standards (the standards).
- Leaders place a high priority on ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. Robust arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare. This reflects the school's commitment to maintaining a safe and supportive environment. Safeguarding is embedded across all aspects of school life.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change requests are granted.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor ensures that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **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	148761
DfE registration number	878/6090
Inspection number	10417132

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 special school
Proprietor	Phoenix Bay Ltd
Chair	Jill Bainton
Principal	Ross Banks
Annual fees (day pupils)	£56,444 to £76,444.
Telephone number	01803220750
Website	<a href="http://www.phoenixbay.co.uk">www.phoenixbay.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:hello@phoenixbay.co.uk">hello@phoenixbay.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	30 April–2 May 2024

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	5 to 16	5 to 16	5 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	24	50	50

## Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	24	50
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	24	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	24	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	24	50

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	19	48
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1

## Information about this school

- The school's most recent standard inspection took place in April 2024, when the standards were met, and Ofsted judged the school to be good.
- The school caters for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, predominantly social, emotional and mental health needs.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Placements are funded by Plymouth, Torbay and Devon local authorities.
- The school does not currently use any providers of alternative provision.
- The school operates on one site: The Pavillion, 3 Seale Hayne, Newton Abbot, Torquay TQ12 6NQ.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to consider the school's request for a material change. The proprietor would like to increase the school's capacity from 24 to 50 pupils.
- This is the proprietor's first request for a material change since its previous standard inspection in April 2024.
- The inspection focused on some of the welfare, health and safety standards in part 3; all of the standards in part 4 for the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors; all of the standards in part 5 for premises and accommodation and the standards in part 8 for the quality of leadership in and management of schools.
- The inspector toured the school with the principal, deputy principal and the school business manager.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, principal, deputy principal, business manager and the chair of the advisory board.

## Inspection team

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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